

THE COSTCO CONNECTION[®]

March 2011 • Volume 26 • Number 3

A lifestyle magazine for Costco members

Weddings by Costco

Wedding bells and bulk
buying can make a happy
(and elegant) union **28**

Also *Also* Revisiting young entrepreneurs **24** • James Franco **65** • Tahiti bound **79**

THE COSTCO CONNECTION



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is here: *Smart Cooking
The Costco Way 2010*

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- To the left there is a tab called "Resources." Here's where Costco members will find information that they will likely refer to often, such as the [Kirkland Signature Wine Connection](#), all of the *Costco Way* cookbooks (also on right), location guides for [Gas Stations](#) and [Business Centers](#), and a beginners guide to [digital photos](#).



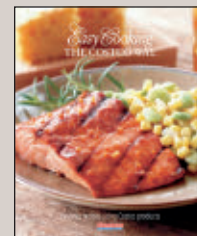
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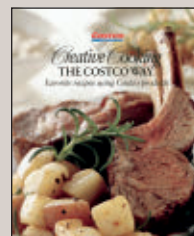
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COVER STORY

Costco members show how to have a beautiful wedding on a budget **28**

Here comes the bride

By T. Foster Jones

Columbia, Maryland, Costco member Lynda Davis and her daughter Beth (right) created a lovely wedding with Costco flowers and food as key parts of the occasion. Says mom, "I know Costco saved us a lot of money and enabled us to have a beautiful wedding for our daughter." For more vignettes from members who celebrated memorable weddings "the Costco way," see page 28.



FEATURES

24 Older young entrepreneurs
One year later, how are those businesses we profiled in 2010 doing?
BY ANITA THOMPSON

55 Sundry best
Helpful household hints from Heloise, plus a Buyer's Pick.
BY STEPHANIE E. PONDER

59 Book Pick: *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky*
Racial identity and relationships make for compelling reading.
BY GLORIA BLAKELY

63 Outside looking in
Charles Ferguson's *An Inside Job* chronicles the financial meltdown.
BY STEVE FISHER

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COVER PHOTO: MEDIA BAKERY

65 127 Hours in a day
James Franco on his experience between a rock and a hard place.
BY BRYAN REESMAN

67 Autoimmunity and you
Autoimmune diseases often run in the family.
BY JACQUELINE M. DUDA

77 Fair hair from Fekkai
Frederic Fekkai brings his salon styling products to consumers.
BY CHRISTIANNA MCCAUSLAND

DEPARTMENTS

7 Front End
By Ginnie Roeglin and David W. Fuller

11 Dialogue
Letters from our readers

15 Fresh Views
Brain food for the entrepreneur

17 Consumer Connection
By David Horowitz

19 Financial Connection
By Suze Orman

20 Informed Debate
Is offshore oil drilling in the best interest of the United States?

50 Creative Cooking
High-performance blenders

61 Arts & Entertainment
Book buyers' picks

73 For Your Health
Healthy teeth + Colon cancer + Peanut allergies

90 Member Connection
Every member has a unique story

INSIDE COSTCO

79 Costco Travel: Tahiti
The Queen of the Pacific reigns over her islands.
BY SARAH WYATT

84 Buying Smart
Kirkland Signature™ bath products have you covered.
BY PAT VOLCHOK
86 Special Events
88 What's New

**SPECIAL SECTION:
HOME AND GARDEN**
Lawn-care tips **39**
Pick the right plants **43**
America in Bloom **45**

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from the publisher's desk

Ginnie Roeglin



Ginnie Roeglin is Senior Vice President, E-Commerce and Publishing, and Publisher of The Costco Connection.

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David W. Fuller is Assistant Vice President, Publishing, and Editor of The Costco Connection.

from the editor's desk

David W. Fuller

I AM SOMETIMES asked to explain the nature of From the Editor's Desk. A fair question, since this column ranges broadly among subjects.

The columns really are about values. They discuss actions we might want to avoid and goals to which we might want to aspire. They aim to suggest, not preach. They are written with one of the country's largest print audiences in mind. They do not strive for controversy; indeed, they seek just the opposite. Sometimes, large segments of our diverse audience have sent in firestorms of response. More often, individual readers have written from their hearts with praise.

Why do these columns elicit such a wide range of responses? Yes, the sheer size (20 million readers) and diversity of the audience is part of the answer. But I believe one of the underlying drivers is the fragmentation of American society, much of which is driven by columnists who stress division, rather than unity. The aspiration of this column is to explore common values that allow us all to move forward as individuals, as organizations, as a nation and as a world community.

If that sounds like an overly lofty goal for a column in a magazine that has as one of its key functions the selling of merchandise, it really isn't. That is because Costco is premised on some of the very values that run counter to so many of the trends of recent years: offering a fair deal for members, treating suppliers with respect, giving employees decent wages and a good place to work, striving for constant improvement, avoiding the self-negating quest for perfection, serving the local community, being mindful of the global implications of what we do and never forgetting to have fun along the way.

It's called "the Costco way," and it is something I deeply believe is well worth a few words of explanation now and then. ☺

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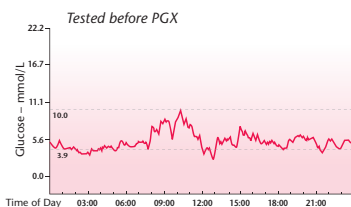


Figure 1: Uncontrolled and erratic blood sugar levels over 24 hours of an overweight woman with a poor diet and no physical activity.

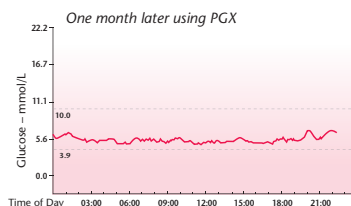


Figure 2: Controlled and balanced blood sugar levels of the same woman after consuming PGX for six weeks with an improved diet and experiencing a healthy weight loss of 2 pounds per week.



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YES. WikiLeaks serves the public interest in terms of empowering us and aiding us in understanding issues.

*Preicy Garin
Silverdale, Washington*

NO. WikiLeaks has gone overboard publishing information that can have no positive outcome. Leaks for leaks' sake serve no purpose.

*Jennifer Stannard
Stamford, Connecticut*

Member comments

Just for the halibut

I want to commend you for your halibut ["Net gain," February 2011]. I have fished more than a few times up in Alaska and Canada and brought in a few halibut. I have to say that your halibut, as it is packaged and prepared, is as good as or even better than that fish I have brought back with me. Plus, one of the packages is just perfect for the two of us and it is for certain a great deal cheaper (if not as much fun to catch).

*Phil Shoebridge
Vista, California*

American dream at sea

My wife and I really enjoyed your research and report on the Bundrant family of Trident Seafoods ["Success at sea," February 2011].

Having served out there, it was awesome to read of all the accomplishments of the Bundrants. They always had a great crew and obviously, with 20- and 30-year veteran employees, and a new church/rec center in Akutan, they are putting people and quality first. That's a real American dream come true.

*Michael and Sherry Horn
Central Point, Oregon*

Nepali mountain high

I loved the article on Conor Grennan ["A quest that scaled mountains," February 2011], and how he helped Nepalese orphans find their parents.

However, I must disagree with his premise that he did what anyone would do in a similar situation. Few people travel the world, volunteering wherever they go. An even smaller number actually would dig deeper to see the real problem. Even fewer would figure out what should be done to fix it. And a very select few would actually do it.

I applaud Grennan's efforts, and appreciate his humbleness. Would that more of us were like him, even in our own corner of the world.

*Sonja Gonzalez
Marietta, Georgia*

Staggeringly incorrect

I have to wonder what Jennifer Nelson was drinking when she wrote in ["Myth information," February 2011] that "8 ounces of alcohol, whether wine, beer or spirits, have a protective benefit." Wine, beer and spirits are by no means equivalent in their alcohol content.

The current wisdom is that two drinks a day (one for women) have a protective benefit. That's two jiggers [total of 3 ounces] of spirits, two 4-ounce glasses of wine or two 12-ounce beers (with approximately 5 percent alcohol).

*Stan Zwerling
Venice, California*

A number of our readers caught this error, something we should have also.—Ed.

De-cluttering advice

Just a thought before throwing something away ["De-cluttering 2.0," February 2011]—why not contact your local museums? You could be contributing to the history of your community.

*Kelly Hughes
Lyman, Wyoming*

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Readers are encouraged to submit letters to our editors on any topic or issue covered in *The Connection*. Please include your full name and phone number or address. Send an e-mail to dialogue@costco.com; or write to: Dialogue, *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088; or fax to (425) 313-6718. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for publication.



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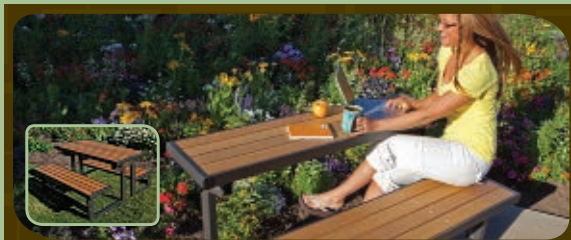
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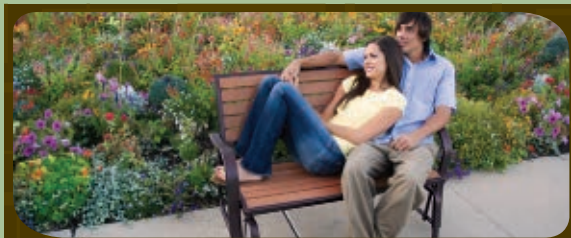
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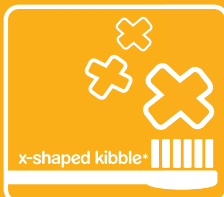
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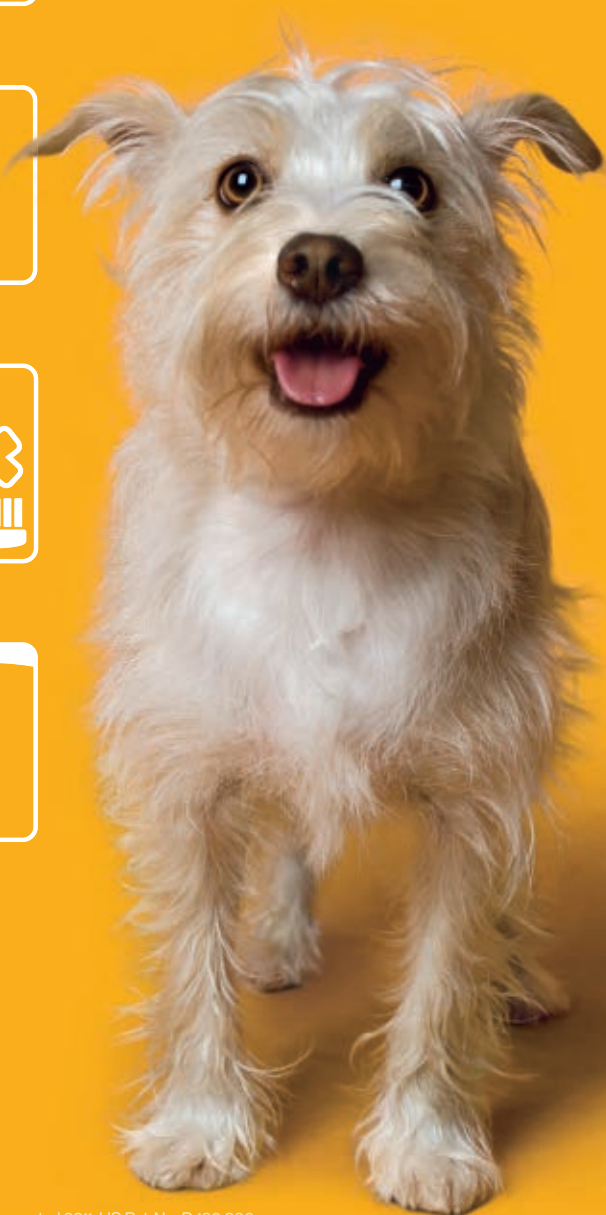
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Rhonda Abrams is the president of The Planning Shop, a publisher of books and software for entrepreneurs (www.planningshop.com).

Go global to grow

MOST SMALL COMPANIES rarely imagine they can do business internationally. It's often hard enough to get customers from across town. But it's easier, faster and cheaper than ever before to do business around the world. It's good for America, too, helping our nation improve its trade balance and keeping jobs here.

Remember, it's not just products you can sell internationally, but services and intellectual property. The world is hungry for American expertise such as engineering, management, design, technology and environmental protection. Figure your business is too tied to your own locale? You'd be surprised: I've even heard of companies exporting miniature golf courses!

When I started my business, I never thought I'd sell internationally. Now, though my publishing company is small, we license our content to publishers in more than 30 countries, and sell our books to entrepreneurs and business schools throughout the world. That's helped me create more jobs right here in the USA.

How can you begin to go—and grow—global?

Shift your outlook. Instead of thinking of yourself as just a small-business person, redefine yourself as a global entrepreneur, seeking global opportunities.

Start with markets you have a connection to. Do you know a foreign language or come from another country? How about members of your staff or colleagues?

Look for government help. The Export-Import Bank of the United States has launched a new program, Global Access, to help small companies export with financing and insurance (www.exim.gov/smallbusiness).

Use technology. There's e-mail, VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), document sharing, project management and more.

Seek international partners. Instead of trying to enter a country yourself, find distributors, sales agents or licensees who already have a customer base.

Do business face to face. Nothing lands a deal or deepens a relationship like a personal connection. Get out there!

So it's time to get out the atlas, look for new markets and redefine yourself as a modern global entrepreneur. ☐

More in archives
On Costco.com, enter
"Connection." At Online Edition,
search "Rhonda Abrams."



CHRIS A. RUSNAK

Support for veteran-owned businesses

IN JANUARY 2010, *The Connection* told you about Patriot Express, a program offered by the Small Business Administration (SBA), designed to offer special loan guarantees to small businesses owned by veterans, reservists and their spouses. Although many federal programs have been cut by the budget ax, the SBA recently announced it is renewing the program for another three years.

"America's veterans have the leadership skills and experience to become successful entrepreneurs and small-business owners," says SBA administrator Karen Mills. "Renewing [this program] means we can continue to fulfill our sacred commitment to the men and women who serve our country by giving them every opportunity for success."

Patriot Express loans, available for up to \$500,000, are offered by the SBA's network of participating lenders nationwide and feature one of the SBA's fastest turnaround times for loan approvals. These loans can be used for most business purposes, including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real estate purchases. SBA district offices can provide lists of Patriot Express lenders in their areas. Details of the initiative can be found at www.sba.gov/patriotexpress. ☐

Business lessons for the family

MANY BUSINESS lessons can be applied to raising a family, according to Costco member Ritch K. Eich, president of Eich Associated (www.eichassociated.com), a leadership, marketing and communications strategy firm in Thousand Oaks, California.

"My wife, Joan, and I established several ground rules that we strive to live by," says Eich. Here are their recommendations.

Develop a game plan (vision and strategy). It should consist of a few planks: living in a community where you can participate actively and where heterogeneity, diversity and a good college exist, as lifelong learning should be an integral part of your ethos; getting to know one another better before you start a family; and a commitment to share experiences and love with each other at the end of your respective workdays.

Set a high moral standard (ethical stance). Strive to set a high standard of regularly practicing faith and remaining active in a denomination of your choice when starting a family and raising children. "We believe it provides a key part of the foundation for a strong, healthy family," says Eich.

Create family traditions (corporate culture). In-

still in your children an appreciation of people different from them, broaden their knowledge of the arts, literature and history, and visit your own and other countries. "It was important that our children learn self-discipline, respect for others, proper etiquette and how to overcome adversity, for experiencing life's ups and downs helps build strong character and resiliency," says Eich. "We also believed it was vital that they learn to be thankful for what they had and assist others less fortunate."

Hone skills for success (structure, focus and execution). Children need to learn to be independent thinkers, self-sufficient, broad minded and secular as well as sacred. Expose your children to people who are intellectually curious and well read, and whose views aren't necessarily the same as theirs. Encourage them to have heroes who are inspiring, courageous and worth looking up to.

"The phrase 'Mom (or Dad), I'm bored' was seldom heard," says Eich. "We used books, Boy Scouts, athletics, concerts, art galleries, lectures, travel, close friends of various faiths and numerous family discussions as ways to broaden their horizons and keep them occupied." ☐



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Avoiding cell phone scams

WHILE CELL PHONES are incredibly useful and have dramatically changed and enhanced our lives, they can also be a source of scams. Here are some common cell phone scams and how to avoid them.

Cloning

A tech-savvy thief clones your cell phone wirelessly and steals your identity, including your cell number and its unique serial number. Then the thief programs another phone with your details and makes calls at your expense.

Action: New technology makes it more difficult to scan the number. Always read your bill closely, and if you see any charges that you feel are not due to your cell phone use, alert your carrier.

Electronic eavesdropping

Thieves can listen to your calls and download your phone records through electronic software. They can even find out where you are, or where you have been at a particular time, by tracking you wirelessly.

Action: Turn the phone off and on throughout the day. This resets any signal and can help you avoid electronic eavesdropping and wireless tracking.

Lost or stolen phones

More than 3 million cell phones are lost or stolen in the U.S. every year. In the wrong hands they can be used to make unauthorized calls and can end up costing you a fortune. A thief can steal your personal information, your contact list and all important data from your SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) card.

Action: For a minimal fee, you may want to buy the monthly insurance offered, so your phone will be replaced, in addition to being protected by warranty. If you lose your cell phone or it is stolen, make sure to alert your carrier right away, so they can reimburse you for any calls made and issue you a new, protected SIM card.

Random text messages

You may receive an unsolicited text message that prompts you to take some sort of action. Most common is what seems to be a message from your bank stating that your account has been suspended. The sender may ask for your PIN and other personal details.

Action: Call your bank if you receive this message. If your bank, your real estate agent, your stockbroker or any other important person in your life needs personal information, speak to that person over the phone or in person and never provide such info via text message.

Ring tone scams

Some free downloadable ring tones are hacked by scammers who can install a virus that damages the phone or steals confidential information.

Or, you may get a text message inviting you to download a ring tone by returning another message or calling a 1-800 number. When you do this, you may incur a hefty charge and unwittingly sign up for a monthly service that you don't want.

Action: Download tones from established, reputable companies only. Don't return messages or calls from people or organizations you don't know.

Subscriber fraud

Subscriber fraud occurs when someone steals your personal information and opens a cell phone account and racks up huge bills in your name. Subscriber fraud costs the cell phone industry an estimated \$150 million a year.

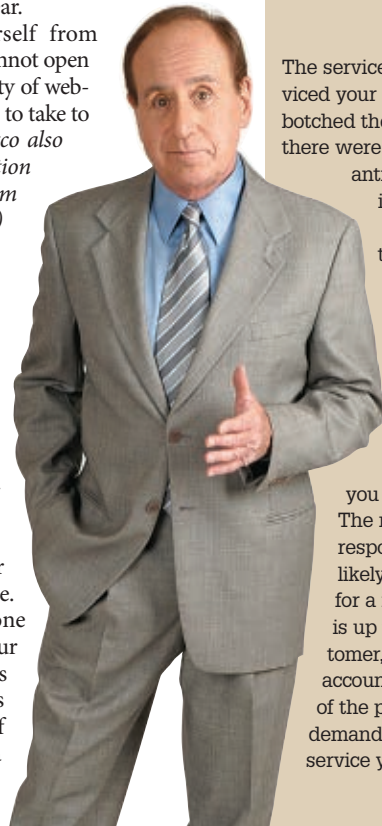
Action: Protect yourself from identity theft and thieves cannot open a false subscription. A variety of websites can advise you on steps to take to protect your identity. (*Costco also offers identity-theft protection for members. Visit Costco.com and click on "Services."*—Ed.)

"Vote" by phone

You may receive a text or recorded message urging you to vote by pressing a key on your phone. This is a trick meant to stop you from casting a real vote for a specific candidate. It is a federal offense to trick people out of their votes.

Action: Avoid this scam by voting in person or by mail, and never by phone.

Regarding your cell phone the same way you would your credit cards or driver's license. Look out for scams that will put you at risk of identity theft and cost you a fortune in time, security and money. [E]



AMY CANTRELL

David Horowitz is a leading consumer advocate (www.fightback.com). He is a frequent guest on radio and television stations. Consult your local listings for dates and times.

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Ask David Horowitz

I BOUGHT A truck a few years ago. Recently, I took the truck into a national transmission repair shop for service. They replaced several parts, repaired the transmission and serviced the engine. I drove the truck away, and after less than 100 miles it just stopped moving. I took the truck back and was told that the radiator was leaking antifreeze into the transmission. The truck needs to be fixed and I am out of money. Who shall I hold accountable and what can I do?

Ray Sylmar, California

The service center that serviced your car may have botched the repairs. Even if there were an issue with the antifreeze, it is an issue that the service center needs to take up with the manufacturer, and it is not your problem. At a minimum, if there was a leak in your radiator, they should have informed you when you were at the shop. The repair center is responsible, and they likely have insurance for a matter like this. It is up to you, the customer, to hold the shop accountable. Alert them of the problem, and demand that you get the service you deserve. [C]

More in archives
On Costco.com, enter "Connection." At Online Edition, search "David Horowitz."

Do you have a question for David?

Just log on to www.fightback.com and "Ask David." For a fee, he will personally respond to your problem if you follow the instructions printed on his website. (Costco members receive a rebate off the normal fee.) Questions and answers of the greatest interest to Costco members will be used in this column (with the permission of the contributor) and will be posted on www.fightback.com.



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WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM



Debts in the family

By Suze Orman

I AM DELINQUENT on my mortgage and my home equity loan. If my house is repossessed or foreclosed, can these institutions touch my retirement investments or garnish my salary?

Sandra D.
New York, NY

SOME GOOD NEWS is that bankruptcy law protects retirement assets. Any money in a 401(k) or a rollover IRA is fully protected. Additionally, money in an IRA that you have made contributions to, such as a traditional or Roth IRA, is typically protected up to \$1 million.

Wage garnishment is a different issue. In some instances, lenders have the right to sue borrowers who have not paid back the full amount of their mortgage. While most primary mortgages are non-recourse, meaning the lender cannot come after you for the unpaid balance, home equity loans and home equity lines of credit are typically considered recourse loans. (The rules vary by state.) So if the lender does seek a deficiency judgment against you, and if the courts grant that judgment, your wages could be garnished until you have paid back the home equity loan. So far lenders have not typically pursued these types of legal suits. If you are falling behind in payments, try to engage the lender to work with you to come to a resolution. For example, see if the lender will agree to a short sale, in which you sell the home, and if the sale price is below your mortgage balance, the lender will "forgive" that shortfall.

WE PLAN TO take on an annuity for \$100,000, for which we will receive 7.5 percent for life, through AARP with New York Life Insurance. Is this a sound investment?

Margarete R.
Oroville, CA

YOU ARE PURCHASING what is known as an immediate annuity, an annuity or a contract with an insurance company that will start to pay you income immediately for the rest of your life. But once you hand that money over to the insurance company it is theirs forever.

There are many payout options you can choose with your annuity. The most common is life-only. That means the payouts continue only as long as the person who takes out the annuity is alive. So, if you invest in a life-only annuity on your life today and then you die in a year, your spouse would not be entitled to a payout. If you choose a joint annuity, the payout will continue for as long as one of you is alive.

Some policies not only continue to make a payout to the annuitants (you and/or your spouse) but also guarantee payments to beneficiaries for a specified period, if you die during that time. For example, suppose you take out a 10-year period-certain annuity. If you were to die after year one, your beneficiaries

would still be entitled to the payout for nine more years before the payment stops.

As you can see, there are lots of options. The life-only option gives you the highest monthly payout but comes with the most risk if you want to make sure a spouse or beneficiaries will receive some money if you die fairly soon after investing in the annuity. With the joint and period-certain options, your monthly payout is lower than if you choose life-only, but if you want to provide some income for a spouse or heirs it can be a smarter move.

I also want you to understand that the payout you receive includes the return of a small piece of your principal each month. So you are not really earning 7.5 percent. In fact, given that interest rates are currently so low, annuities purchased today are locking in some very low payouts. That doesn't make immediate annuities bad—they can be a smart way to provide steady income—but you need to educate yourself on exactly what you are buying. One thing to consider is to purchase a \$50,000 immediate annuity today, and then wait another year or so to see if interest rates rise; if you then purchase another \$50,000 annuity, you will be locking in a higher interest rate.

MY FRIEND IS unemployed and has \$22,000 in credit-card debt. His wife is barely making enough money to pay their monthly bills. They have no property. He has about \$21,000 in 401(k) and Roth IRA combined. Should he take out this money and decrease the debt as much as he can to reduce his monthly payment so he can still afford to pay it off?

Bob S.
Los Angeles, CA

I COMMENT YOUR friend for wanting to make good on his debts. That is something everyone should aim for. But now that he is unemployed, I do not want him mortgaging his future retirement security to pay off credit card debt. I would encourage him to try to negotiate a reduced payment schedule until he is back at work.

If that doesn't work, well, I want to remind everyone that credit card debt is unsecured. That means in the event you do not repay your debt, the credit card issuer cannot come after your other assets—especially retirement accounts—to recoup its losses. I hope the card issuer has the good sense to want to work with your friend so he can continue to honor his debts after he gets back to work. ☺

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Ask Suze Orman

E-mail your personal-finance questions to:
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Please include
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Q&A with Suze Orman
The Costco Connection
P.O. Box 34088
Seattle, WA 98124-1088.

Suze will answer
selected questions in
this bimonthly column.

She regrets that
unpublished questions
cannot be answered
individually.

Suze Orman's new book
The Money Class will be
available at most Costco
locations on March 8.

MARC ROYCE

Is offshore oil drilling in the best interest of the United States?

THE DEEPWATER HORIZON explosion and oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico last April reignited the debate about offshore oil drilling.

Supporters of offshore drilling say it helps the United States become less dependent on imported oil, and would lessen the U.S. trade deficit and help secure jobs for American workers. They insist that if we don't drill for oil here we will have to buy it from countries that can use our energy purchases as a weapon against us.

Critics argue that the environmental damage created by oil spills and normal oil-producing activities outweighs the benefits we get from oil and offshore oil drilling. They warn that offshore drilling distracts the United States from finding and developing alternative sources of energy, which would also provide jobs and improve the economy while preserving our air, water, earth and animal life.

What do you think?



IMAGES: MEDIA BAKERY COMPOSITION: BILL CARLSON



Find out more about this topic on the Web:

www.livescience.com/environment/080625-oil-drilling.html

www.ehow.com/about_5085313_benefits-drilling-american-oil.html

<http://energytomorrow.org/?gclid=CKXvqJj4sKYCFaFk7AodmEepow>

YES

from members:

Souang Benedict
Aloha, OR



Technology is improving the search for energy, and offshore drilling will satisfy this thirst until more sustainable energy sources can be relied upon.

Edward Allshouse
El Paso, TX



[It] is a relatively safe and lucrative activity. The true danger is the government's lack of enforcing environmental guidelines.

Catherine Boho
Pembroke Pines, FL



It is very important that we become less dependent on other countries for our oil supply. America should pursue energy independence.

NO

from members:

Kevin Manning
Oakland, CA



We are past the point where we need to look for more sources of fossil fuels. The U.S. needs to invest heavily in alternative-energy development as rapidly as possible.

Kelli L. Daniels
Kansas City, MO



Marine life and the industries that depend on [it] depend too much on the environment. Leave the oceans and other water masses in the hands of nature.

Herbert Houston
Chicago, IL



We are putting more money into [alternative] power. In today's scientific world, we can focus more on solar and electrical.

from an expert in the field:



Brendan Bradley is communications manager for the Independent Petroleum Association of America (www.ipaa.org), a national trade association representing oil and natural gas producers.

OFFSHORE NATURAL GAS and oil production is indispensable to America's energy supply. With vast reserves available, this production creates revenue for the federal and state governments, creates hundreds of thousands of jobs and reduces dependency on foreign oil. These elements are crucial to America's energy and economic future.

But the men and women working in the industry make the best case for why offshore oil and natural gas production is essential. And these might not be the folks you're thinking of.


Independent producers hold 81 percent of the producing leases in the Gulf of Mexico. These small businesses, not large multinational companies, produce 30 percent of the Gulf's oil and 60 percent of its natural gas. In 2009, this production accounted for \$38 billion in economic benefits, more than 200,000 jobs and \$10 billion in federal and state royalties and revenue.

Losing this production would have a devastating impact. Recent delays in shallow-water production have threatened more than 40,000 American jobs on the Gulf Coast and \$12.5 billion in income losses.

Offshore natural gas and oil production means jobs and energy production; the nation cannot afford to lose a fraction of either. Quite simply, this is a national security issue. Is it in America's best interest to get its oil from military dictators overseas, from countries with no regard for the environment, or from here at home?

Accountability and correction for the disastrous deep-water spill is a serious matter. This process is underway, and ensuring deep-water safety requires more than a Band-Aid fix. Likewise, the question of continuing offshore production should be better answered than with amputation. America deserves better than overcorrection.

U.S. economic and energy viability is at stake, but this is not at odds with environmental responsibility. The men and women working in the American offshore oil and natural gas industry stand by a 60-year record of reliability and safety in the Gulf's shallow waters.

Ensuring vital jobs and energy supply, offshore natural gas and oil production is an investment in America's potential and its people, allowing American ingenuity and labor to improve and grow through mistakes and success. Such investments have often defined the United States and remain in her best interest. 

from an expert in the field:




Peter Lehner is the executive director of the Natural Resources Defense Council (www.nrdc.org) and author of *In Deep Water: The Anatomy of a Disaster, the Fate of the Gulf, and How to End Our Oil Addiction*.

WHILE WE CANNOT prevent, absolutely, another oil spill, we can fix what's broken. We can put safeguards in place to greatly improve an industry currently putting profit above people. And we can move our country toward cleaner, safer sources of energy.

Since the explosion in the Gulf of Mexico, an event that killed 11 men and put thousands of fishermen out of work, it's become clear that the oil industry has very few guidelines to follow.

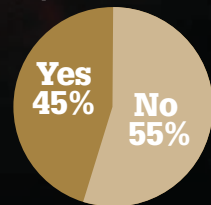
It's also been revealed that the industry chose not to invest in developing better safety standards on its own, having no pressure to do otherwise. Over the past three years, the \$289 billion industry spent \$39 billion on developing new wells, but it invested only about \$20 million per year on researching safety improvements, accident prevention and spill response—one-tenth of 1 percent of industry profits. It's no wonder they were so unprepared to deal with the Gulf spill.

Let me be clear: There is nothing wrong with oil companies pursuing profits—that is what companies are designed to do. But the industry should be just as good at protecting workers and the environment as it is at finding oil and gas. It should be held to the same level of safety standards we require of the nuclear and aviation industries. And if it won't make those investments on its own, then government should demand it.

We should also seize the opportunity to break our addiction to oil. The United States uses 800 million gallons of oil every single day. That's simply not sustainable. Instead of continuing to dig ourselves into an ever deeper hole, we should embrace the new technologies that can free us from our thirst for oil. We should be creating the next generation of energy-efficient cars and trucks; we should be improving our public transit options and investing in high-speed rail; we should be designing communities with sidewalks and biking lanes. All of this can be done right now with existing technology. And it can cut our oil consumption in half over the coming decades, while unleashing American innovation, putting millions of people back to work and laying the foundation for global leadership in the clean-energy market. We just need to decide, as a nation, that we want this freedom from oil. 

FEBRUARY DEBATE RESULTS:

Does WikiLeaks serve the public interest?



Percentage reflects votes received by February 11, 2011.

• • • • •

JANUARY DEBATE RESULTS:

Should Internet openness be ensured by regulation?

YES: 39% NO: 61%

Percentage reflects votes received by January 31, 2011. Results may reflect Debate being picked up by blogs.



See Dialogue pages for more debate responses

Opinions expressed are those of the individuals or organizations represented and are presented to foster discussion. Costco and *The Costco Connection* take no position on any Debate topic.

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*Based on POS sales in Food, Drug, Mass and Club.

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Sleep Well Naturally

Waking up well rested and alert leaves you feeling great and ready to conquer the challenges of everyday life — relationships, kids, parents, work and health – but unfortunately there are many instances when it's not easy to fall asleep.

In fact, one out of every three Americans report they have trouble sleeping.¹

As a result, many rely on drug sleep aids to help them fall asleep, yet many times the result of taking a drug has undesirable effects such as morning grogginess or an unfulfilling night's rest. We all know that when you wake up well rested and alert, you have plenty of energy to focus on what's important.

What is Nature Made Sleep®?

Nature Made Sleep is a drug-free sleep aid that contains L-theanine to help you relax and melatonin to help you fall asleep. L-theanine is an amino acid found primarily in green tea. Nature Made includes 200 mg of L-theanine, the amount clinically proven to promote relaxation.

Melatonin is another ingredient in Nature Made Sleep. Melatonin as a dietary supplement has been repeatedly shown in clinical studies to be effective in helping people get to sleep. Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone made by the body that helps control your sleep cycle. Melatonin can be low for some people due to aging, stress or other reasons, so a supplement containing melatonin may help.

Nature Made Sleep is an easy supplement to work into your daily sleep routine. Nature Made Sleep works best with healthy sleep habits.



Why Nature Made Sleep?

Nature Made Sleep sets itself apart from the rest. It offers clinically proven ingredients to help you relax and fall asleep naturally without the morning grogginess.

At Nature Made, quality is a high priority. It is important to purchase your products from reputable manufacturers that, like Nature Made, follow Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and take the necessary steps to ensure the highest-quality ingredients are used.

Sleep is essential to your overall health, and now Nature Made Sleep offers a great solution!

10 Healthy Sleep Habit Tips

1. Try to go to bed and wake up at the same times. A regular routine is helpful for good sleep.
2. Avoid napping during the day.
3. Avoid stimulants such as caffeine, nicotine or alcohol at least 2 to 3 hours before bedtime. Don't forget, chocolate has caffeine!
4. Make sure your room is dark. A lighted room can disturb your sleep.
5. Associate your bed with sleeping. Try not to watch TV, listen to the radio or read while in bed.
6. Exercise is good not only for overall health but for sleep as well!
7. Food before bedtime can also disrupt sleep, so stay away from large meals just before bedtime.
8. Keep your bedroom temperature comfortable.
9. Try to avoid upsetting conversations before bedtime. Stress can play a key role in your inability to sleep well.
10. Try Nature Made Sleep as a part of your overall "sleeping well" plan!

[†]These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

1. 2009 Sleep in America Poll. National Sleep Foundation.

Where are they now?

LAST MARCH, *The Connection* featured five young entrepreneurs in our cover story. We were curious about how they were doing one year later and contacted them for an update. It seems that these young people are building businesses with staying power and learning a few things along the way. Congratulations to each. (To find last year's story online, go to Costco.com, click on "Costco Connection Magazine" and then on "Back Issues." Scroll to March 2010.)—Anita Thompson

Eric B. Heinbockel, Chocomize

Sells customized chocolate bars
(www.chocomize.com)

The feature in *The Costco Connection* really confirmed a theory that we had, which has become kind of our business hallmark: that a company with a unique concept and interesting back story can gain substantial exposure on a national scale through PR efforts rather than spending on advertising. We have been featured in *The New York Times*, *BusinessWeek*, *CNN.com*, *USA Today*, and *O, the Oprah Magazine*, to name a fraction. We have spent less than \$2,000 on advertising.

Chocomize has been cash flow positive every month since March 2010, and we have grown significantly. We currently employ 10 production workers; sales for December 2010 were 20 times those of December 2009. This fall co-founders Fabian Kaempfer and Eric Heinbockel spoke to MBA students at Harvard Business School and Rutgers Business School about our experience. Last month we were awarded our SBA region's Small Business of the Year award.



DAVE MOSER

We have learned a great deal about starting a business and continue to learn every day. We look forward to continuing to grow our core business (online custom bar sales) in the United States, but we also look forward to expanding into retail outlets, expanding geographically (this summer we began shipping to Canada) and expanding our product line perhaps beyond just chocolate bars.

Stefanie Smith, Launch into Boston

Helps young professionals get situated in the Boston area (www.launchintoboston.com)

Since the article was published, Launch

into Boston has gained twice the number of clients from across the country. This was really the boost we needed.

Before the article, we were finding many clients we'd come across were already settled in the city and [told us], "I could have really used you when I was moving." *The Costco Connection* moved us in a different direction [so that] we captured our clients' attention before they started their journey.

Many clients called me months after the



Stefanie Smith,
Launch into
Boston

BRIAN SMITH

Young entrepreneurs share their successes

article was published and said their mom showed them the article about Launch and put it away until they planned their move. They would then dig out the article and call us when they were ready and really found this resource to be a relief.

Sean Whalen, Alter-G, Inc.

Manufactures and sells anti-gravity treadmills (www.alter-g.com)

In the past year our revenues have almost doubled in a very tough economy. Our rapid growth has been propelled by the new Anti-Gravity Treadmill launched a year ago (the M300 model), combined with an expansion of our sales force and the appointment of more than 15 international distributors.

We have shipped almost three times more units than we did in 2009 to a broad base of customers. These include pro sports teams such as the Dallas Cowboys, colleges such as Princeton and Harvard University, medical facilities and fitness centers. We also sell a lot of units to the Veterans Affairs system that help our servicemen and -women rehabilitate from injuries sustained in Iraq and Afghanistan. The largest increase in units has gone to nursing homes, where our product enables the elderly to get up and walk or run pain free in a fall-safe environment—and thereby resume normal living.

After being the driving force in creating and bringing the Alter-G to market, I have now turned to a building-the-market role. I moved to Europe to manage operations for Europe, the Middle East and Africa—locating and setting up distributors, finding and training customers, and setting up a customer service and logistics organization to support our rapidly expanding global presence.

Bethany Herr-Hatfield, Raw Way

Manufactures and markets raw-food bars (www.rawwaylife.com)

The first few months following the article, my online orders grew by the hundreds! My self-run business was taking off at a much faster pace than I could manage. I was covering manufacturing (hand-making each bar, which takes 30 hours from start to finish), packaging, shipping and handling, and customer service with the help of a couple of family members. I quickly realized my business needed some structural support, and fast.

In late March [2010], Amy Miles and Phil Shaltz (my current business partners) were flying to Health Expo West looking into dif-

ferent health businesses to work with. While on the flight, Amy read her *Costco Connection* and was intrigued by my story. She mentioned to Phil she thought we would be a great fit as we live locally and share the same passion for health. Phil e-mailed me from the plane, and when they arrived back in Michigan we met.

Phil and Amy truly appreciated the foundation of the business: health, passion and helping others discover true health. I was taken by the structure, ambition and business sense Amy and Phil brought to the table. For me, this meant moving myself on to actually running the business instead of working for it, and adding dynamic, strong business partners to Raw Way.

Now, eight months after our partnership [began], we have five employees working for Raw Way. We moved our manufacturing to downtown Flint, Michigan. This not only brings us our own space, and more of it, but it is allowing us to be part of a city that is trying to revitalize.

Next, we have added a new crunchy raw candy bar to our line and updated our entire line of bars. Our next big endeavor is to find a large retail chain to carry our bars, as we have customers from all over the states asking where they can buy Raw Way bars, thanks to *The Costco Connection*!



Justin
Brotman,
Healeo

DAN DELONG/RED BOX PICTURES

Justin Brotman, Healeo

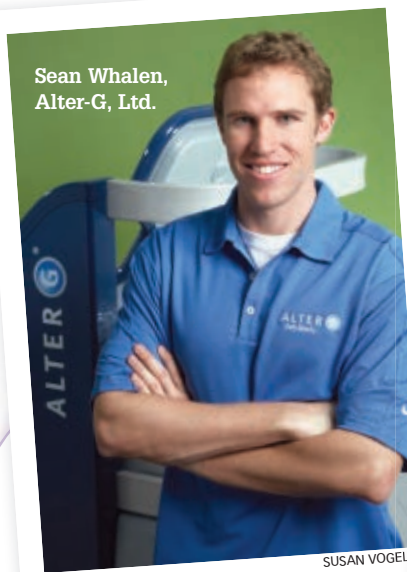
Retail health food store and juice bar (www.healeo.com)

The Costco Connection article was a major launching pad for my business in a few different ways. Our national presence was immediately established as measured by our Web sales. Customers from around the country and world began ordering from our online store. Never before had we shipped anywhere farther than San Francisco [from the business's headquarters in Seattle].

This jump-start of our e-commerce business gave us an unexpected source of revenue aside from our physical retail location.

Another important outcome of the article was its psychological boost for our staff and me personally. E-mails, calls and visits from new people were incredibly supportive and enthusiastic about what we were doing.

Running a small business can be emotionally taxing, to say the least, and this support was a main factor in fueling us to work that seventh day in the week and that 12th hour of the shift. ☑



Sean Whalen,
Alter-G, Ltd.

SUSAN VOGEL



Bethany
Herr-Hatfield,
Raw Way

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FREDERIC FEKKAI, FOUNDER AND CREATOR, WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES.
WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM

From shopping aisle

WEDDINGS AREN'T CHEAP. On average, according to the Association for Wedding Professionals, a couple in the United States will spend \$19,581 (between \$14,686 and \$24,476) for their wedding, not including the cost for a honeymoon or an engagement ring. But weddings are not a time you want to skimp or cut corners, either. The opportunity to share the joy and love with your family and friends as you join in wedded bliss is a unique event—it's not like throwing a kegger, for Pete's sake. Everything has to be perfect. You want your guests to feel honored. You want your intended to feel treasured.

So, the question is, for those of us who don't have between \$14,686 and \$24,476 to spend: How do you achieve these goals?

To answer that question, we put the call out to Costco members, a savvy bunch of shoppers if ever there were. And members responded, with hundreds of e-mails and letters from all over the United States, detailing the inventive ways that they and their families used Costco—for rings, invitations, accommodations, flowers, food, drinks, desserts, gifts, photos and honeymoons—to create memorable, elegant and festive nuptials. —*T. Foster Jones*

The Introduction

ALTHOUGH MY HUSBAND and I purchased a number of items from Costco for our wedding day, the most unusual thing I found while shopping at Costco was my groom ...

When I was away at college, I would come home occasionally on weekends and it never failed that my mom would ask me to go with her to Costco at some point during my visit.

She was on a first-name basis with her favorite cashier, Stephen, and would always look for him so she could make sure to go through his line. Though I didn't know him very well, Stephen and I had attended a few of the same church camps growing up.

My mom seemed exceptionally excited when she learned this, and though I had no idea at the time, when she would visit Costco and I wasn't with her, she would go through his line and tell him that he needed to call and ask me out.

Apparently he took customer service very seriously, as he eventually took my mom's advice and asked me on a date.

Three and a half years later, we tied the knot. Our first joint purchase? A Costco Executive Membership. —*Whitney and Stephen Bobbitt, Blue Springs, Missouri*

Proposal and Ring

AFTER DATING FOR nearly seven years, my boyfriend, Jeff, suggested we finally go ring shopping. Our close friends recommended Costco. Lo and behold, there was the ring—an emerald-cut diamond solitaire in a pavé setting. And it was in our price range! I tried it on and it fit perfectly. It was “the one.”

A couple months went by and then, in late June, Jeff asked if I wanted to see if the ring at Costco was still there. “If you still love it, then we'll buy it,” he said.



MEDIA BAKERY



Whitney and Stephen Bobbitt

JANA MARIES PHOTOGRAPHY



Lana and Jeff Peterson

SUZANNE MAPES



FRANCE FREEMAN

to wedding aisle

When we got to Costco, I beelined for the case and the ring was gone! Someone had bought *my* ring! I began to cry inconsolably and I ran out of the store to the car.

In between sobs, I complained how the perfect ring slipped away, how I'm supposed to get engaged in Paris and this isn't the way it was supposed to go. It was a breakdown worthy of daytime television.

Finally, I calmed down a bit. I looked like a wreck. My eyes were puffy, my hair was all over the place and my nose was bright red.

Then, Jeff looked over at me and said, "Well, Lan, since you wanted it *that* badly ..." He popped open his center console and pulled out a ring box. Then he flipped it open and said, "Will you marry me?"

It's the ring! My mind was racing and I was in utter disbelief. I was in shock. Then finally I said, "Jeff Peterson, I hate you! I can't believe you had the ring this whole time!" Then I said yes.

So each time we tell our engagement story or I look down at my ring, we think of Costco.

—Lana (Ong) Peterson, Irvine, California

Announcements and Invitations

WHEN WE NEEDED to inform our families, friends and guests of our upcoming nuptials, I shopped around searching for the best price, options and quality. We agreed that Costco was the way to go.

We ordered wonderful save-the-date magnets from Costco.com, and we were delighted with them! The overall product (including envelopes), to the quickness in shipping, just couldn't be beat. So when it came time to order invitations, Costco.com once again pulled through. Beautiful colors, magnificent designs, great paper quality and several options to choose from! We couldn't have been happier with our selection because the graphics were unique to us, and the colors were perfection and fit our springtime wedding to a tee!

We have our invitation framed, and I still look at it and get a smile on my face when I think of our celebration on our special day!

—Julie J. Davy, Vinings, Georgia

Rehearsal Dinner

WE HOSTED THE REHEARSAL dinner for my son's wedding in Dallas, Texas. Although we had the dinner at a local restaurant, we featured Costco's wonderful All-American chocolate layer cake as the centerpiece of the dessert table. It was displayed on an antique crystal pedestal and topped with beautiful, fresh strawberries that were purchased at Costco also. Everyone loved the cake and thought it had been done by a



JIM FAGIOLLO

specialty bakery. Well, of course, it was a specialty bakery—our local Costco!

The flowers for the rehearsal dinner were also purchased from Costco. The flower delivery was made the day before the wedding rehearsal and we were allowed to take our pick from the entire delivery to find the perfect lavender roses to complement the color scheme for the event. Then the flowers were tagged and kept in a cooler until we stopped by the store the next day to pick them up on our way to decorate for the dinner.—Kim and Kevin Melton, Maypearl, Texas, parents of Clint Melton

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30



FRAN KEAL

COSTCO COURTSHIP

WE HAD A "Costco wedding," but first we had a Costco courtship! Our initial visit to Costco was shortly after a typical date or two when the restaurant check escalated while we gazed at each other rather than price. We both enjoy good food and wine, so Frank introduced me to Costco. We chose wine from Costco's wide selection along with entrées that proved every bit as good as dining in a fine restaurant. Costco soon became the prelude to most evenings together. We were often complimented on being a "nice couple" as we shared samples while shopping. Their observation was correct.

So, after two years of Costco dating, what would be more logical and economical than a wedding à la Costco?

Decorative plants and Rainforest Alliance roses graced our place as well as being stunning in both bouquet and boutonniere. Food was a variety of fruits and vegetables, paired with finger food that went perfectly with champagne, all purchased at Costco. We also discovered that there is no such thing as leftover Costco wedding cheesecake!

Costco made our special day affordable with no loss of elegance and enough money to manage pictures and an announcement yet to come. The addition of wedding gifts from Costco to our home brings us full circle.

Thank you for fostering our courtship and making our wedding so joyful and complete!—Bonita Eiden and Frank J. Morganti, Plantation, Florida



MEDIA BAKERY

THE CHECKLIST

The following items are included in the total average wedding cost. Checkmarks are next to items available through Costco.

Attire and accessories

Bride and groom accessories
Suit (purchased; rented) or tuxedo (purchased; rented)
Veil ✓

Wedding dress ✓

Beauty, health and spa

Diet, weight loss, gym ✓
Facial, hair and makeup service
Manicure and pedicure
Teeth whitening ✓

Entertainment

DJ or live band

Flowers and decorations

Boutonnieres, corsages ✓
Bridal and bridesmaid bouquets ✓
Ceremony decorations ✓
Ceremony flower arrangements ✓
Flower girl flowers ✓
Reception decorations ✓
Reception flower arrangements ✓
Reception table centerpieces ✓
Gifts and favors ✓
Gifts for attendants, parents, bride, groom, guests ✓

Invitations

Ceremony programs ✓
Guest book ✓
Invitations and reply cards ✓
Reception menus ✓
Save-the-date cards ✓
Table or place cards ✓
Thank-you cards ✓

Jewelry

Engagement ring ✓
Necklace, earrings ✓
Wedding bands ✓

Wedding and video

Wedding photographer
Wedding videographer
Planner/consultant
Wedding memory album ✓
Photo developing ✓

Transportation

Travel for guests ✓

Venue and food

Rehearsal dinner (food) ✓
Ceremony location ✓
Ceremony officiant
Reception location ✓
Reception (beverages) ✓
Reception (food) ✓
Reception rentals (tables, chairs, etc.)
Wedding cake ✓
Hotel room for after reception ✓

Honeymoon

Vacation packages ✓

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

Ceremony

WE LIVE ON THREE acres in Columbus, Wisconsin. We felt that we needed a focal point for the wedding. Bruce, the father of the bride, wanted a real wood pergola. So, we purchased the Costco 12' x 12' Premium Shorea Pergola kit from Costco.com, and used it as a starting point for our wedding planning. Bruce built a deck around the pergola and installed columns to allow for electrical outlets and additional style. The boards on the deck and on the columns were stained to match the pergola kit. An outdoor heater was also purchased from Costco for the event. The chairs were set on three sides of the pergola for the wedding.

When the bride and I were shopping at Costco, we found plastic silverware that looked like silver for 6 cents each piece. The rental company was charging 35 cents for each piece. We decided to go with the Costco silverware. The tables looked beautiful and the cleanup was much easier. We also purchased serving trays, spoons, tongs, aluminum foil, plastic bags and garbage bags for cleanup at Costco.

We chose Costco.com's 40-piece Wedding Calla Lily Collection for our wedding party. The delivery came with a DVD and there is an online tutorial about what to do when the flowers arrive. Our flowers arrived on Thursday, and while we were still taking the boxes into our house to unbox the flowers, a telephone call was received from the Costco floral department explaining exactly what we should do with the flowers. Now that is customer service!

After hearing so many wonderful things about the Costco bakery, we ordered nine sheet cakes for the wedding: three chocolate with mousse filling, three vanilla with cheesecake filling and three carrot cakes. The chocolate and vanilla cakes were

totally gone that evening.

Our whole Costco experience has been wonderful. In today's difficult economic times, you can still have a gorgeous wedding if you plan ahead, ask friends and family for help and shop at Costco.

—Pam Zander, mother of Gabrielle Falkner
Columbus, Wisconsin

DAVID DUNCAN

Anne Eby



Ryan and Gabrielle Falkner

WWW.AIROSENTHALPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Flowers

AS OUR SON, JUSTIN, and his beautiful young lady, Anne, planned their event, their decision to purchase flowers from Costco was probably the easiest to make. We've found that floral purchases from Costco for our lodging business have consistently provided the freshest, most attractive flowers with the best variety anywhere, at the best prices.

At the warehouse, Costco's floral vendor, Christine, cheerfully ushered us to the back warehouse cooler and proceeded to wheel out carts full of flowers for Anne to choose from.

Anne chose bunches of deep reds, oranges, greens and yellows of predominantly gerbera daisies, her favorite flower. These were accented with beautiful fresh greens, seeded eucalyptus and clusters of deep red berries, and the stems wrapped with deep red satin ribbon.

With the flowers, we were able to create breathtaking bouquets, corsages, boutonnieres and floral arrangements for both the ceremony and the reception. The intense fall colors of these flowers were perfect for the autumn theme of the wedding. These were an absolutely stunning accent against the black tuxedos, black bridesmaids' dresses and the white of the bride's beautiful Victorian gown.

Planning the colors and design, choosing the flowers, working together in the preparation and enjoying the amazing results became an event in itself that intensified the wonderful enjoyment of the wedding celebration.—*Susan Eby, Leavenworth, Washington, mother of Justin Eby, Seattle*

Reception

AS WE WERE preparing for our daughter's marriage in December, we discovered many things at Costco we could use for the wedding!

The wedding cake would have cost more than \$500, with only 200 small servings, but my daughter saw your All-American chocolate cakes and had a brilliant idea. Why not set three of them side by side on pretty glass pedestals? *Voilà!* With the addition of floral cake toppers from our florist, we had a magnificent wedding cake for about \$50! Our guests raved about the delicious and beautiful cakes.

On the dessert buffet we served Kirkland Signature™ European Cookies with Belgian Chocolate, Almond Roca, Lindt Lindor Truffles, Ghirardelli Squares, peanuts, almonds, smoked almonds and cashews. Since it was winter-time, we made wassail using Costco apple juice served in a beautiful white crockpot to keep it warm.

The guest tables were decorated with red ribbon from Costco and snapshots of the bride and groom through the years, processed at your in-store photo lab. Even the batteries for the faux candles were from Costco.



We also purchased a 9-foot pre-lit Christmas tree and decorated it with gold ribbon and a set of red tree ornaments from Costco. Underneath the tree were gold-wrapped packages with beautiful large gold bows, using wrapping paper and ribbon also purchased from Costco.



Steven and Misti Millward

A Costco pre-lit garland hung over the entry-way to the hall using your red ribbon to make a large center bow for it. It was a lovely welcoming touch for our guests. Red roses from your floral department were also used for petals for the flower girl to drop for the bride and groom.

All of our guests raved about the evening, saying, "Finally a reception with good food, and beautiful decorations too!" If they only knew how much money we saved.—*Kevin and Lynda Tracy, parents of Misti Tracy-Millward, Boise, Idaho*

Gifts for Guests

I AM CANADIAN and my husband is Sicilian. We married in New York City, where we live. For our wedding favors, every guest received two bottles, one filled with maple syrup (to represent the Canadian contingency) and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

THEME WEDDING À LA COSTCO

MY DAUGHTER HAD an incredibly creative and beautiful outdoor wedding on July 4, 2009, in Camarillo, California.

She planned the entire wedding around an all-American, Fourth of July theme, and Costco played a large role in her wedding.

She chose to have apples as the table name markers. She also had apples as a wedding favor for the guests. Each guest took home a bag with three apples and a recipe for a family favorite, apple-cranberry cobbler. Instead of wedding cake we all enjoyed Costco lattice apple pie with Kirkland Signature vanilla ice cream.

My daughter ordered 15 apple pies from the bakery ahead of time, and the day before the wedding, July 3 (a busy Costco shopping day!), we bought all the apples, apple pies, ice cream, wine, strawberry lemonade and more at Costco in Simi Valley. We just celebrated Leslie and JR's first wedding anniversary with a Fourth of July barbecue and, of course, a Costco apple pie!—*Chris Evans, Roseville, California, mother of Leslie (Evans) Jacobs, Los Angeles*



JR and Leslie Jacobs



CHRIS EVANS

the other olive oil (for the Italians). Of course the olive oil and maple syrup were purchased at Costco—not only was the price right but the quality of the product was top-notch!

—Jennifer Giuffrida, New York City, New York

Honeymoon

MY DREAM WEDDING was to get hitched in Hawaii and to honeymoon somewhere in the South Pacific. I had always wanted to stay in a hotel with a bungalow over the water. Lucky for me, my then fiancé thought it was a good dream too!

We are a middle-class couple who cannot afford anything crazy, so we thought it was going to be a long shot to package two destinations together along with flights, car rental and travel insurance.

I called local travel companies; they either tried to talk me out of our destination wedding idea or the prices were astronomical. I had arranged travel once before through Costco Travel, and after exhausting almost all hope decided to just call Costco and see how expensive it would be and if it was possible to package two different destination deals together.

Surprisingly, it was not only possible, but several thousands of dollars less than the companies I had called. I put the travel agent on hold, called my fiancé to see if it was OK and booked everything all at once. We would get married on Kauai and honeymoon in Tahiti. The Costco Travel staff was very nice, and made accommodations to ensure we had enough time to catch connecting flights. We also were able to purchase travel insurance. Additionally, we booked everything on our American Express Card, which gave us a 2% cash-back bonus.

We had a “rehearsal dinner” at the hotel’s pool, where my dad and mom barbecued steaks, and had fresh fruit and salad, all purchased at mainland prices at—where else—Costco.

We loved Tahiti, the over-water bungalow, the staff and people of the island of Huahine. We would love to go back to either destination. In fact, our family already wants us to renew our vows to have another fun family vacation in Kauai. Almost all of our friends and family who joined us for our wedding booked their travel through Costco as well.

—Alissa and Mike Vaughn, West Jordan, Utah

Memories

IF WE COULD have asked Costco to be our sixth groomsman it would have been a logical choice, as it



©VILMA BERGENHOLTZ PHOTOGRAPHY

seemed like Costco was involved in our wedding planning from the very beginning.

Our foray into wedding planning à la Costco began with the wedding invitations [through Costco.com], and after those there was no turning back. We wandered the store while waiting for our engagement pictures to be printed and planned out the cocktail hour. We found gifts for all of the groomsmen and ushers. Just days before the wedding we returned to place our cake order.

And lastly, thanks to Costco, all of our memories are safely printed in a wedding album designed via Costco.com. Not only were we able to design our own album but we also didn’t have to wait, since it took Costco only three business days to send us our album. Both the parents of the bride and parents of the groom are thankful, as they too received Costco albums. To say the least, Costco saved us time, money and, almost most important, stress. Now if only Costco sold wedding dresses ... [They do!—Ed.]

—Jennifer and Adrian Peyrot, Grayslake, Illinois



JENNIFER PEYROT



SCOTT BLACK, MIKE VAUGHN, MEDIA BAKERY

WEDDING PLANNING INFORMATION

www.frugalbride.com
www.thefrugallife.com
Bridal Bargains: Secrets to Throwing a Fantastic Wedding on a Realistic Budget (Windsor Peak Press 2008)
www.mywedding.com
www.weddingchannel.com
www.ewedding.com
www.sellthebride.com
www.theknot.com
www.weddingwire.com
www.onewed.com
www.brides.com
www.onestopweddingplanner.com
www.littleweddingguide.com
www.weddingstylemagazine.com

Connecting

Members can find A-to-Z wedding solutions at Costco warehouses, Costco.com, Costco Business Centers, Costco Travel, 1-Hour Photo and more.

THERE ARE MANY, many more stories that, if we had room, we would have loved to share.

We’d like to thank all those Costco members who contributed, and wish each couple and their extended families continued happiness and joy. Their stories proved to us an important lesson: that while you can’t put a price on love, a beautiful celebration of love can be achieved at any price.



Of satin and lace

A Special Event for that special dress

AS SAVVY COSTCO members shared on the previous pages, they were able to create the wedding of their dreams, spend a lot less than they expected and still have a first-class experience for themselves and their guests.

"Now," as Jennifer Peyrot noted, "if only Costco sold wedding dresses."

Well, Costco does.

Couture designer Kirstie Kelly (www.kirstiekelly.com) has partnered with Costco to bring Kirstie Kelly Signature, her sophisticated and feminine line of wedding gowns, to members through exclusive Special Events at select warehouses throughout the year.

Based in Los Angeles, Kelly, a Costco member, has been designing women's wedding attire for celebrities and socialites for 14 years. Her designs are known for their elegance, fine detailing and quality, including construction. For example, each dress is made with an internal foundation so the gown will hang and fit properly.

Among the six styles available at each Special Event, there is something for everybody, Kelly tells *The Connection*. "There is a traditional, feminine element to these styles," which she describes as trend-right versus trendy. In other

words, they look modern today, but won't appear dated in 10 years when you pull out the wedding album.

"This year I spent a lot of time with texture and the way fabric moves," Kelly continues. "One of our gowns is head-to-toe Alençon lace, hand-cut and hand-sewn. Others feature beading that is very textural, with fabric flowers among the crystals. They are just beautiful."

With styles suitable for the ballroom as well as an intimate destination wedding, the gowns are created from beautiful fabrications of satin, organza, taffeta and dupioni silk.

Besides gorgeous gowns and fingertip- and cathedral-style veils, brides-to-be attending the Special Event will find a jewel box of a salon complete with bridal consultants and a fitting-room experience.

"If you already have a vision or a venue picked out, share this information with the consultant so that she can help guide you as you consider options," Kelly advises. She also recommends wearing the right undergarments and not focusing on perceived bodily imperfections, but instead "highlighting what is already uniquely beautiful about you. Every woman has distinctive features that can be enhanced by a beautiful gown," she adds.

"Brides are beautiful because they are beautiful brides, not because they spent a fortune on a gown."—Anita Thompson

Wedding Dress Special Event at a glance

- A private, salon-style fitting area with three-way mirrors and experienced bridal consultants
- Six exclusive styles of gowns in sizes ranging from 2 to 24
- Samples of each dress to try on, with multiple sizes per sample
- Limited selection: Only 108 gowns will be available at each Special Event
- This is a cash-and-carry purchase; buy it when you see it
- Fingertip- and cathedral-style veils will be available
- Appointments are recommended; go to Costco.com and search "wedding dress."
- Savings start at 40 percent of retail

Watch the Special Events page in *The Connection* for announcements of the wedding dress Special Event schedule.—AT



Gold Wedding Bands

These 14 karat gold wedding bands have timeless appeal. Both the men's 6mm width band and the women's 4mm width band feature comfort fit design. Item #440704 (men's), #564932 (women's)

Diamond Wedding Rings

The striking .80ctw round brilliant cut wedding set features a .70ct center diamond accented by 21 round diamonds. Item #440494



This 2.05ctw platinum diamond wedding set features a .70ct princess cut diamond accented by round diamonds. Item #440483



Fresh Roses

The unparalleled beauty of roses makes them the perfect complement for your wedding day. Item #283169, #43328.



Canon EOS Rebel T2i

Easy-to-use, lightweight digital two-lens camera kit with 55-250mm IS zoom lens, that also takes full HD movies. Item #557283



Samsonite Dual Spinner Luggage Set

Get to your wedding or honeymoon destination with this stylish set. Includes 21" and 27" upright. Item #543451

Kirstie Kelly Signature Wedding Dresses

Choose from six exclusive designs that feature exquisite detailing and construction. Try on samples in a private fitting area. Sizes: 2-24. Veils also available. Appointments recommended; go to Costco.com and search "wedding dress" for an event near you.

Say "I do"
with Costco

Whether in warehouses or online, these products are just a sample of what Costco offers to help you prepare for that special day—and still stay within your budget.

Celebrate



Making Memories

Remember your special day forever with photographs and video, beautifully presented.



Old Town 11" x 14" Picture Frames 2-Pack

Each frame comes with a double-bevel cream mat. Item #946738



Kirkland Signature™ Professional Glossy Inkjet Photo Paper

Maximize the quality of your prints, whether they are digital pictures or for scrapbooking. Item #503626



Honeymoon

Costco Travel offers hundreds of exciting vacation choices. Whatever type of honeymoon you're dreaming of, chances are you'll find it in the Travel section of Costco.com.



Planning...

Make professional-looking print projects at home, including photobooks, invitations and scrapbooks. Item #563501



Food and Entertaining

Choose from an array of food platters, hors d'oeuvres options and fine Champagne for your guests and family to enjoy at the reception, engagement party or a night-before cocktail party.

Tail On Shrimp Platter 3.5 lbs.

Garnished with lemons. Includes 8 ounces of cocktail sauce. Item #14770

Vegetable Tray

Healthy, crisp, finger-size vegetable appetizers. Sixteen servings per tray. Item #29598



Blue Diamond Smokehouse Almonds

The perfect snack for any reception or cocktail party. Item #411016



Meat and Cheese Platter

Includes 1 pound of roast beef, browned turkey and ham with 8 ounces of provolone, cheddar and Swiss cheese and an 8-ounce cup of deli mustard. Item #33299

Lifetime Banquet Table

This durable 6' fold-in-half table is convenient, lightweight and perfect for weddings, receptions and engagement parties. Item #238397



Strawberries

Sweet, decadent, healthy strawberries go perfectly with Champagne, are popular as hors d'oeuvres or dessert, and make a colorful garnish. Item #27003, #82012



Cuisinart® Brew Central™ 12-Cup Programmable Coffeemaker

This 12-cup coffee maker offers 24-hour programmability and more. Item #716106

Keurig® Platinum B70 Gourmet Single Cup and Tea Brewing System

This sleek, premium single-cup home brewing system brews a perfect cup of coffee, tea, hot cocoa or iced beverage in less than a minute at the touch of a button. Item #520673 Also Costco.com



Wedding Gifts

Choose from a variety of gifts, ranging from coffeemakers to cookware, for the happy couple, bridesmaids or groomsmen.



Cuisinart® Counter Top Convection Toaster Oven-Broiler Exact Heat™

Offers seven functions: bake, convection bake, broil, toast, bagel, defrost and reheat. Item #276927

Charisma 6-Piece Sateen Sheet Set

Luxurious softness awaits you with 400-thread-count, 100% Egyptian cotton bedding. Includes one flat sheet, one fitted sheet and four pillowcases. Item #440440, #440441, #440442 Also Costco.com



Kirkland Signature™ 13-Piece Stainless Steel Cookware

All pieces are constructed of 18/10 stainless steel suitable for all cooktops, including induction. Item #402582 Costco.com



Charisma 100% Hygro Cotton Bath Collection

The collection includes a 35" x 70" bath sheet, 30" x 58" bath towels and a four-piece set that includes two 16" x 30" hand towels and two 13" x 13" washcloths. Various item numbers. Also Costco.com

Over and Back 20-Piece Porcelain Set

Classic white dinnerware with an elegant shape. Dishwasher and microwave safe. Item #534392



Cuisinart® SmartPower Premier™ Duet

This two-in-one blender–food processor features a 600-watt motor and 50-ounce blender jar. Item #506323



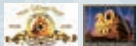


Kirkland Signature™ Men's No-Iron Dress Shirts

These 100% extra-long-staple cotton shirts are constructed with two-ply compacted yarns for color vibrancy. Assorted patterns and colors. Item #365676

Party Preparation

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Dine outdoors in style



This 7-Piece Cast Aluminum Dining Set combines no-rust aluminum construction and a durable powder-coated finish with old world traditional styling to create a classic look of form and function. The centerpiece of the set, the dining table, features a beautiful handcrafted slate tabletop. The chair cushions use Sunbrella® fabric, which is resistant to stains, mildew, chlorine and fading. The dining table also features a center hole that fits an umbrella pole up to 2 inches. The 7-piece set includes one dining table and six dining chairs with cushions. Furniture cover included.

Table dimensions: 79.7" L x 41.7" W
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WAREHOUSE ONLY

Lush lawns start in spring

Simple tips for maintaining the best yard on the block

By Laura Langston

MEDIA BAKERY

GREAT-LOOKING LAWNS don't just happen—they're created. However, when your spring lawn emerges from winter weather with more splat than spring, getting it into shape may feel overwhelming. Breaking down the job into the following steps will make it relatively easy.

Step one: Rake. You probably raked in fall, but it's equally important in spring. Rake on a sunny day when the grass is dry. "And don't be too vigorous, because the roots are still fragile," says Scott MacDonald, category marketing manager for Scotts Canada. Raking removes winter debris and dead grass, separates blades matted down by winter snow and helps control thatch.

Step two: Check your lawn for bald spots, patches of moss and areas of grass compaction. All indicate the soil should be aerated. Aeration increases the amount of air, nutrients and water reaching the soil, strengthens roots and helps prevent thatch. You can rent a lawn aerator or hire a lawn service to do the job.

Step three: Top-dress your lawn or have a service do it for you. Top dressing improves the quality of the soil, making it more breathable and nutrient rich. It also helps with drainage, evens out small bumps in the grass and stimulates the grass to produce new shoots.

The University of Missouri Extension recommends spreading a thin, ¼-inch layer of compost over the lawn after aerating. You

could also spread composted manure or equal parts loam, sand and peat. Never bury existing turf with too much top dressing (the grass should be exposed to sunlight). If you use too much, it may not be properly absorbed and could smother grass roots.

Next, consider overseeding your lawn. Overseeding encourages thick growth and discourages weeds. Always purchase certified seed or blends that specify germination rates and weed seed content. Scatter seeds by hand or use a seed slitter (these machines can be rented). Water lightly every day until seed germinates.

For bald spots in the lawn, spot-seed instead, also after top dressing. Use a commercially prepared seed mix or something like Scotts Turf Builder EZ Seed, a premixed blend of compressed coconut husks, seeds and fertilizer. The coconut husks swell and retain water (turning light brown when they dry out, cueing the gardener that water is needed), and the fertilizer nourishes the seeds. "Be sure to follow package directions," MacDonald says. "Because when using premixed seeding products or fertilizer, more is not better."

The Costco Connection

Most Costco warehouses and Costco.com carry lawn mowers, spreaders, a variety of live plants, gardening tools, fertilizer, hoses, planters, pots, fountains and ponds to help keep your lawn or garden attractive.

Apply a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer when you spot-seed or overseed (but not if you use a mix that contains fertilizer). A month or so after the grass germinates, give it a quick-release nitrogen fertilizer no matter what seed mix you started with.

One of the biggest mistakes homeowners make is not fertilizing their grass regularly. "Grass is a plant, and people feed their other plants, so why not grass?" MacDonald asks, adding that while grass will grow if it's not fed, it'll flourish with the proper nutrients.

Scotts recommends fertilizing every other month from April to October. Ben Hamza, director of technical operations for TruGreen, a lawn-care service, adds that before using any fertilizer, homeowners need to look carefully at their soil. "People sometimes have spring fever and start too soon," he says. "But you want to make sure the soil is not saturated or frozen, because if you apply fertilizers on frozen soil, it won't be properly utilized."

Organic options include compost and lawn clippings from mulching mowers or a premixed all-purpose, slow-release fertilizer such as Scotts Turf Builder. If you do use the latter, switch to a fall/winter fertilizer for the last feeding.

Hamza and MacDonald agree that healthy, well-fed lawns are rarely troubled by weeds. But even with the best care, weeds can and do

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

appear. Sometimes it's simply bad luck; other times weeds indicate an imbalance in pH.

Grass needs a neutral pH of between 6.5 and 7. An imbalance in either direction can result in weeds, moss or poor growth. Some homeowners reach for lime or sulfur to adjust pH, but it's not wise. "Across the United States, there are a variety of soil types: clay, sandy and those that are in between," says Hamza. "Getting a pH reading is highly recommended before making any additions to your soil." Do-it-yourself kits will give you an approximation, but they aren't as accurate or detailed as professional tests. You can also check with your state university extension office or a local lawn-service company.

When it comes to using herbicides or pesticides to eradicate weeds, Hamza says it's critical to follow label directions. "The recommendations are very specific," he says.

"And not following them can do more harm than good."

Proper watering and mowing techniques help prevent weeds. MacDonald recommends giving lawns a deep watering once a week. One to two inches of water is ideal.

Finally, cut wisely. For the first cut of the season, Hamza recommends lowering the blade just a little to remove debris, leaves or mats from the previous winter. After that, however, bring the blade back up and avoid cutting short. Grass that's 2 to 3 inches high develops a healthier root system, is better able to withstand drought and will more easily crowd out weeds than grass cut shorter. [E]

Laura Langston is a novelist and journalist who is quite content with the green grass growing outside her Pacific Northwest home.

Small-space makeover contest!

WE ARE LOOKING for the most inventive ways that Costco members have used Costco in remodeling a small backyard space. This could be an outdoor kitchen, a play space for the kids, or a quiet retreat in the corner of your garden.

Just send before-and-after photos of your small-space backyard remodel and a brief description of your project.

Winners will be selected by a panel of judges whose decisions will be final. The first prize winner receives a \$500 Costco Cash card. One second-prize winner will receive a \$250 Costco Cash card; one third-prize winner will receive a \$100 Costco Cash card. Submissions may be featured in a future issue of *The Costco Connection*.

All entries must be received by September 1, 2011. Send your photos and write-up along with your Costco membership number to: Backyard Makeover, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088, or e-mail to: Connection@costco.com, with "Backyard Makeover" in the subject line.

No purchase necessary. Open to legal residents of the U.S. (except Puerto Rico) who are age 18 or older at the time of entry. One entry per household. Employees of Costco and their families are not eligible.

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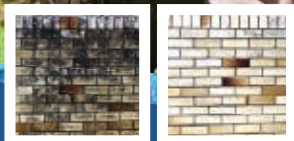
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* Photo taken 6 months after one single application of Wet & Forget.



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WAREHOUSE ONLY

Behind the greenery

Costco plant programs are a colorful value

COSTCO'S LIVE PLANT program has been growing—literally—in size and popularity across the country. “While all the variables—plant and planter size, number of blooms, etc.—make it difficult to directly compare plant pricing among retailers, Costco members have obviously seen the value,” says Kevin Gleason, buyer for the plant program. “From February through May, we sell thousands of trees, plants, flowers and shrubs, the most popular being the landscape flat assortment, Thuja evergreen and 16-inch combo planter.”

Here are some descriptions of these best-selling plants, to help you choose the best arrangement for your needs and for your region.—*T. Foster Jones*

Geraniums

- Ideal for patios, courtyards and balconies.
- Geraniums flower in spring and will add color to the garden until frost.
- Plant geraniums where they will receive sunlight for best flower production.
- Geraniums will grow in almost any type of soil if it is well-aerated and porous.

Gerbera daisies (pictured at right)

- Ideal for planters and pots.
- Gerbera daisies will bloom the longest where they get strong light.
- They produce large blooms up to 4 to 5 inches across.
- Gerbera daisies grow best in warmer climates, but they can be cultivated as indoor plants if you have a spot that receives light through most of the day.
- They do not do well in extremely hot weather. Provide some shade outdoors

if you live in a region that frequently gets temperatures in the 80s to 90s.

Impatiens

- Number-one bedding plant in the country.
- Summer annual available in many colors and varieties.
- Used for bedding and in containers, window boxes, baskets and raised planters or worked into a perennial border.
- Grows best in partial shade, using good potting soil or soil rich in organic matter.

Marigolds

- Hardy, annual plants are ideal for flowerbeds or planter boxes.
- Plant in half-sunny or sunny locations.
- The soil must be well-drained, moist and fertile.

Osteospermum (pictured above)

- Ideal for patios courtyards, balconies and flower beds.
- Needs plenty of light—even direct sunlight.
- Needs to be fertilized and watered regularly.

Pansies

- Ideal for flower beds or planter boxes.
- Cooler-weather flowers.
- Pansies are tolerant of a wide range of soil conditions, but prefer rich soil with good drainage.

Petunias

- Petunias flourish in full-day sun. They will survive in shaded areas; however, blooming will be inhibited.

The Costco Connection

Costco warehouses carry hundreds of varieties of plants, flowers, trees and shrubs. Selection varies by region and season.

- Petunias in garden beds require weekly watering to keep the soil moist at the root level, but those grown in containers or baskets require daily watering.

Thuja

- Thuja is a fast-growing evergreen that grows easily in many types of soil and requires little special care.
- Ideal for homeowners who wish to establish an attractive, natural privacy fence.
- Full sun for best results
- A deep weekly watering is essential, especially during hot, dry periods.

16-inch combo planter

This mix of several flowers varies across the country and can include geraniums, euphorbia, lobelia, supertunia, salvia, verbena and sweet potato.

- Most are sun to partial-shade plants.
- Most will handle a light frost, but none will make it through a freeze, so they will need to be brought inside at times.
- None need to be fertilized. ☑

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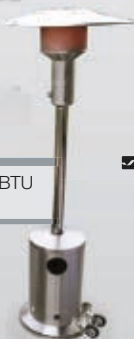
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WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM

The Sinissippi Rose Garden in Rockford, Illinois, features an operational floral clock.

America in Bloom

By Eva Shaw

AMERICA IN BLOOM

CAN PLANTING FLOWERS boost civic pride? Up property values? Make streets safer? "Yes!" say the enthusiastic folks involved with a homegrown movement called America in Bloom (AIB, www.americainbloom.org).

Based on the simple premise that neighborhoods and urban centers are nicer when there's an abundance of gardens, the grass-roots, all-volunteer program bloomed in 2001, establishing friendly competitions. "It's not about winning," says Costco member and fourth-generation nurseryman Dave Williams of Westfield, New Jersey. "AIB

improves communities, one planter box and one garden at a time." The annual gardening contests, now in more than 170 cities and 38 states, have created a national beautification program fostering local pride.



For a year's worth of bragging rights, everyday homeowners, civic groups, garden clubs and merchants' associations come together in a sociable rivalry that recognizes their gardening and beautification efforts. "AIB isn't a beauty contest," says garden expert Bill Ruppert, Kirkwood, Missouri. "In our town, because of AIB's

connections, there were free and extensive opportunities for our businesses and citizens."

Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, AIB provides the framework and the judges, with an idea book and plans on how to get any community on board. The ripple effect of increased civic pride continues after the contests are over, as groups and neighbors stay committed to having their towns bursting with flowers.

While gardening might be second nature to many Costco members, the AIB contests have cultivated unexpected results. For instance, well-tended downtowns have less crime, says Sherry Cronin, executive director of Westfield's downtown association; Westfield won the AIB's 2010 Landscape Criteria award. "Flowers and gardens in the community seemed to deter vandalism." Apparently it's not comfortable to be a criminal when surrounded with gardens.

To learn more, contact AIB about how to involve your homeowners association, gardening club or organization. It's time to dig in, flaunt your homegrown civic pride and see America in Bloom. [E]

Eva Shaw, www.evashaw.com, is a ghostwriter, author, writing instructor and avid gardener.

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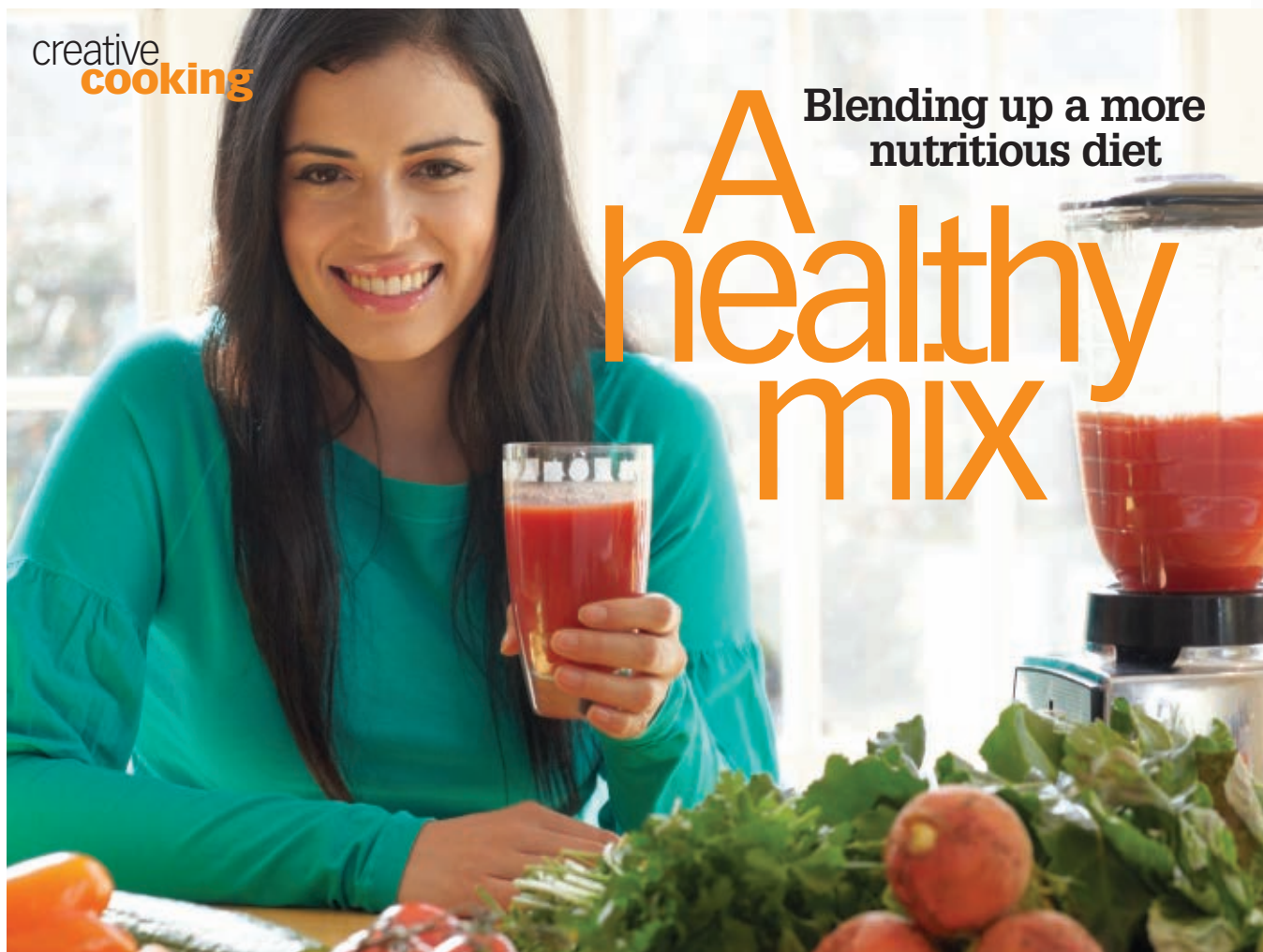
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A Blending up a more nutritious diet healthy mix



MEDIA BAKERY

By Tim Talevich

EAT MORE FRUITS and vegetables, and cut back on calories.

Sound familiar? It's what experts have been telling us for years to keep our bodies healthy and weight down. But adopting these healthier habits is easier said than done: We're busy, we're set in our old eating ways and, let's face it, deep down we'd rather eat a candy bar than a carrot.

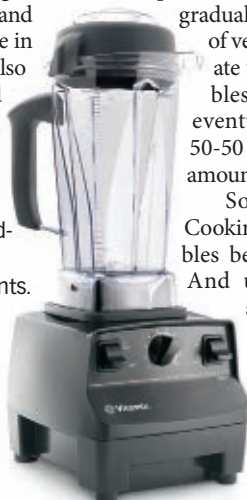
I began looking at ways to add more fresh, whole foods to my own diet in practical, tasty ways. One essential tool I found is a high-performance blender that can turn fruits and vegetables into a nutrient-packed smoothie in mere minutes. These powerful machines also serve as traditional food processors and can make everything from soup to salsa.

The Costco Connection

Costco features high-performance blenders from Vitamix and Blendtec in the warehouses during rotating Special Events. For a complete schedule, see page 86. You can also buy Vitamix blenders at Costco.com. For a complete list of Special Events in Costco warehouses, go to Costco.com and enter "Special Events" in the search box.

Mixing it up

The government's food pyramid (www.mypyramid.gov) advises adult men and women to eat about 5 cups of fruits and vegetables each day. A high-performance blender makes it easier to hit that goal because a smoothie or soup can include several fruits and/or vegetables. The trick is making something that tastes good. Try this approach: For smoothies, start off with a fruit-to-vegetable ratio of 70 to 30, so that the sweet fruit masks the sharper taste of the vegetables. Then, gradually increase the percentage of veggies. Over time, your palate will adjust to more vegetables and less fruit, so that eventually you might have a 50-50 mix, or even just a small amount of fruit in the recipe.



Some other handy tips: Cooking stronger-tasting vegetables before blending helps out. And using herbs, spices and something sweet, such as honey or agave nectar, can make dishes delicious.

With blended foods, you're eating whole, unprocessed fruits and vegetables, including the

critical fiber. Also, the blending process breaks down the cell walls of these whole foods to release the maximum amount of nutrition. You can add flaxseed, protein powder and other ingredients to boost the blend.

Saving time and money

Once you figure out the basics, using a blender is as easy as pulling the ingredients from the fridge. I find that blending is a smart way of using the bulk sizes of fresh fruit and vegetables from Costco. For example, I can buy large containers of blueberries in season and freeze them for future smoothies. If bananas are getting too ripe, into the freezer they go (peeled). And if the spinach needs to be eaten, it goes in nearly any recipe.

The right equipment

The higher-end (and more expensive) blenders, such as the Vitamix and Blendtec models at Costco (see information at left), have the horsepower to process virtually any food you use, raw or cooked. Their blades are even powerful enough to create friction to heat soups. Standard blenders can make hundreds of great smoothies, but they work best with softer foods. Do your research and make sure you buy the right machine for the meals you want to create. [E]

This recipe is a favorite of Cooper and Duncan Roth, made by their mom, Christine, of Manhattan Beach, California. It's called "Wow" because that's what the kids said when the blender motor went on.



Wow Smoothie

- 1/2 cup soy or almond milk
- 1/2 cup any type of pure fruit juice
- 1 cup peach or pear, or 1 apple, cut into pieces (seeds removed)
- 1 frozen ripe banana
- 1 1/2 cups frozen broccoli
- Sprinkle of flax or chia seeds

Place all ingredients in a blender in the order listed, secure lid and mix until creamy. Makes 2 servings.

Tips: For kids, it helps to serve this smoothie in a colored cup with a straw so the green doesn't scare them away. The riper the bananas, the more they cancel the taste of the broccoli.

Nutritional information: Each 12-ounce serving has 175 calories, 37 g carbs, 2 g total fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 7 g fiber, 61 mg sodium, 95 mg calcium, 7 g protein, 22 g sugar.

Popeye's Ice Cream

- 3/4 cup half and half or coconut milk
- 1/4 cup agave nectar
- 2/3 cup nonfat powdered milk or powdered coconut milk
- 2 cups spinach, lightly packed
- 1 1/2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups ice cubes

Add ingredients to a blender pitcher and secure lid. For Blendtec models, press "Ice Cream" and serve. For other blenders, blend at medium speed for 20 seconds, then on high for 25 seconds or until smooth. Makes 3 3/4 cups.

Recipe courtesy of the *Fresh Blends* cookbook from Blendtec (www.blendtec.com).

Nutritional information: Each 1/2-cup serving has 80 calories, 11 g carbohydrates, 3 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 10 mg cholesterol, 0 g fiber, 25 mg sodium, 9 g sugar, 1 g protein.

David H. Murdock's SuperJuice

- 1 1/2 cups pineapple juice
- 1/2 orange, peeled
- 2 sprigs fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1/2 cup spinach, washed
- 1/2 medium tomato
- 1/2 cucumber (leave peel on)
- 1/2 banana, peeled
- 1/2 medium apple
- 1/2 medium carrot

Wash and cut up fruits and vegetables into smaller sections. Place all ingredients, in the order listed, into a blender container; secure lid and blend on high until smooth. Divide evenly between two 16-ounce glasses. Drink immediately. Makes 2 servings.

Recipe courtesy of David H. Murdock, chairman, the Dole Food Company.

Nutritional information: Each 16-ounce serving has 200 calories, 48 g carbohydrates, 0.5 g total fat, 0 g cholesterol, 5 g fiber, 25 mg sodium, 760 mg potassium, 34 g sugar, 3 g protein.

Harvest Cheddar Soup

- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons white wine
- 1/4 medium onion, peeled
- 1 celery stalk, halved
- 2 Granny Smith apples, quartered (seeds removed)
- 2 potatoes, baked and quartered
- 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- Pinch of white pepper
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Recipe courtesy of *Vitamix Whole Food Recipes* (www.vitamix.com).

Place all ingredients, except the cheese, into a blender container in the order listed; secure lid.

Follow the blender's directions to bring the speed to high. Blend for 6 to 7 minutes or until heavy steam escapes from the vented lid.

Reduce the blender's speed and carefully remove the lid or the lid plug.

Drop in the cheese and blend for an additional 15 seconds. Makes 6 cups.

Nutritional information: Each 1 cup serving has 224 calories, 28 g carbs, 8 g total fat, 5 g saturated fat, 23 mg cholesterol, 3 g fiber, 407 mg sodium, 184 mg calcium, 10 g protein, 7 g sugar.

Have a great recipe using Costco products? Send it to us and we'll choose the best to feature in *The Connection*. Submissions should be sent via e-mail to smarttips@costco.com; put "Great recipes" in the subject line. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

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WAREHOUSE ONLY



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- **TREAT YOURSELF.** For colored-treated or especially dry hair, use Humectress Conditioner as a deep conditioning treatment. Apply after shampooing hair in shower; leave in for five minutes or more. Then rinse for amazing results.
- **GIVE YOUR HAIR A BREAK.** For a sophisticated and healthy style, skip the blow dryer once a week. After washing, twist wet hair into a long ponytail, then wrap it around itself and secure with a bobby pin. A healthy updo.
- **BE KIND TO YOUR HAIR.** A blow dryer is less harsh than a curling or flat iron. Try creating your style with a round brush and blow dryer as a gentler alternative to hot styling irons. Make sure to use the nozzle attachment so there's no temptation to put the dryer directly against hair, which can be damaging.
- **MULTI-TASK YOUR CONDITIONER.** Try rubbing a drop of Humectress Conditioner onto palms and then smoothing and taming unruly hairs, frizz, static and flyaways. It's like moisturizer for your hair.

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OxiClean® Gets the Tough Stains Out.

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WAREHOUSE ONLY

Solving the laundry quandary

Helpful hints from Heloise

ONE CHORE THAT absolutely has to happen is laundry—the alternative ranges from silly to embarrassing. Why not simplify the task by making sure it's done right in the first place? The following tips from domestic icon Heloise are sure to help.

Laundry 101

Are your clothes getting as clean as possible? There are some things you can do to make sure that you and your washing machine are doing the best job possible.

A lot depends on water temperature—did you know that ...

Hot water removes dirt from heavily soiled clothes and kills more germs than cold water, but it can fade the dyes in some colored clothes and may cause wrinkling.

Warm water usually gets lightly soiled clothes clean and is safe for most colored clothes, but it doesn't kill germs unless a disinfectant is added.

Cold water requires cold-water detergent to get clothes really clean. You also can dissolve powdered detergent in hot water before adding it to the wash water in a pinch.

Detergent

Is there a difference between powdered and liquid detergent? According to the Soap and Detergent Association, the only difference is the texture. An added bonus with liquid is that it can be used to pretreat stains. Whichever type of detergent you use, always follow the dispensing directions on the product container to achieve the best results.

The Costco Connection

Members can find laundry detergent, bleach, aluminum foil and more in their local Costco. For more household tips, see Costco's *Household Almanacs* online at Costco.com. Click on "Costco Connection Magazine" at the bottom of the page.



MEDIA BAKERY

Don't overload your washer. Most washing-machine manufacturers have load information in their owner's manuals. The consensus seems to be that a normal load is around 6 to 20 pounds of dry clothing, sheets or other washables.

Sheets (especially large ones) need more room in the washer than a piece of clothing to be able to move around and get clean and rinsed. So, if your machine states 6 pounds is a load, it might mean that large flat and fitted sheets, pillowcases, and a few other items will make up a full load. ☐

Around the house

ONCE YOU'VE TACKLED the mountain of laundry, here are a few more tips from Heloise for taking on everything from the dishes to stairway safety.

Clean a baking dish with foil.

If you make a vegetable dish that doesn't form a hard crust as it bakes and that you cover with foil to bake, you can use the foil to clean the dish. After the casserole is done, remove it from the oven. When it cools off, crumple up the foil and use it to clean the glass dish (like a scrubbing pad).

Pour bleach easily.

The seal on a new bottle of bleach can be hard to remove. Try this: Grab a pencil or other sharp instrument, and punch a hole in the center of the seal. You will have better control of the flow. A gentler flow of bleach will not splatter on and ruin some fabrics.

Do a five-minute dusting. Stand in the middle of the room and look at all the surfaces—dining room, coffee or side tables and nightstands. During the week, do a five-minute quick dust. My mother called this "top cleaning." It will help control the dust until you have time for a more thorough cleaning.

Paint a stairway. Making sure a basement stairway is well lit is helpful for elderly people whose eyesight is dimming. Here's another way to make the stairs easier to see: Paint every other step on the basement stairway a bright color. ☐

Reprinted from Handy Household Hints from Heloise. Copyright © 2010 by King Features Syndicate Inc. By permission of Rodale Inc., Emmaus, PA 18098.

Buyer's pick

Kim Thuringer
Buyer, Corporate
Food and Sundries



SPRING MAY BE the traditional time to clean, but any time of the year is a great time to use Kirkland Signature™ Household Surface Wipes. I have the wipes in the kitchen, in each bathroom, in the laundry room and I even have some in my car.

Kirkland Signature Household Surface Wipes measure 8.2 by 9.8 inches, larger than the 7-by-8-inch lead-

ing national brand of disinfecting wipes. They can also be used on a Swiffer® floor mop to clean finished floors, glazed tile, laminate flooring and linoleum.

We worked diligently with our supplier to develop an eco-friendly pack and reduce the amount of plastic in our packaging. We eliminated the bulky canister and replaced it with a pack that allows the wipes to start and dispense more easily.

Our wipes are effective against *E. coli*, salmonella, staph, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and the flu virus. Kirkland Signature Household Surface Wipes assure you that you are helping to keep

a clean, germ-free environment both at home and at your workplace. ☐



MORE STAIN-FIGHTING* MORE POWER TO YOU

New concentrated Tide® powder detergent is formulated to give you more stain-fighting power than non-concentrated Tide powder, in a smaller package.

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To learn more about Bernafon hearing systems with *Bluetooth* wireless technology, contact a Costco Hearing Aid Center* today at www.costco.com or 800.774.2678.

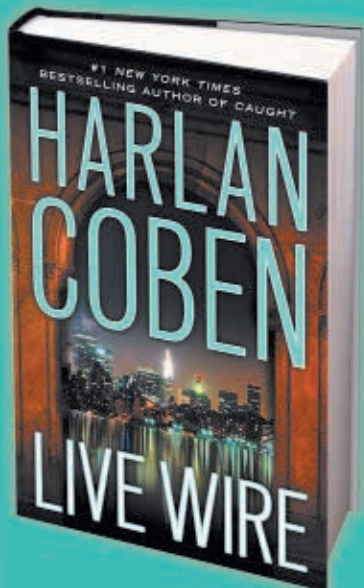


SoundGate

Enjoy TV, take a phone call or listen to music wirelessly through your hearing aids with *Bluetooth* connectivity accessories from Bernafon.



NEW from the
#1 *New York Times*
best-selling author

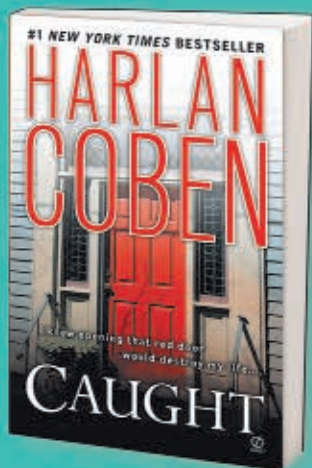


ON SALE MARCH 22

Harlan Coben proves once again "nobody writes them better"* in an electric thriller that asks:

IS A PRETTY LIE BETTER
THAN THE UGLY TRUTH?

*Associated Press



AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK MARCH 22


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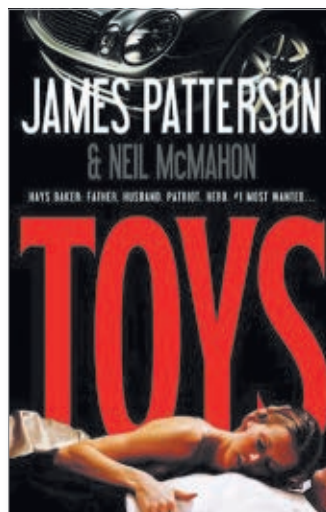
Paperback available now

FAST-PACED AND
RIVETING—DELIVERS THE
WALLOP CUSSLER'S FANS
HAVE COME TO EXPECT.

Clive Cussler and co-author Jack Du Brul deliver another white-knuckle mystery on the high seas in **The Silent Sea** (Berkley). Captain Juan Cabrillo helms a ship that is secretly a high-tech vessel in service to the United States. On what he thinks is a routine recovery mission, he makes a shocking discovery—one that endangers everyone on the entire planet, and one only he can stop!

"The man who can't miss!"

—Time magazine



Hardcover on sale March 14

WHAT HAPPENS
WHEN THE
RULING CLASS
TURNS ON ONE
OF THEIR OWN?

Hays Baker truly had it all: a beautiful wife and two great kids, wealth, power and all the best things in life. He's also a superhuman soldier with extreme strength and intelligence. He's part of the Elites, the secret class of citizens

who from birth get to have it all—until one fateful day, when Hays makes a shocking discovery and becomes hunted by the very group he once belonged to. **Toys** (Little, Brown), from superstar author James Patterson and Neil McMahon, is an edge-of-your-seat thrill ride featuring one man fighting for not only his own survival—but also the world's.

— NEW from Jodi Picoult —

"Picoult is a skilled wordsmith, and she beautifully creates situations that not only provoke the mind but touch the flawed souls in all of us."

—The Boston Globe



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Includes a
CD of original
music that
corresponds
to the story.

In her newest novel, *New York Times* best-selling author Jodi Picoult explores what constitutes a "traditional family" in the emotionally gripping and touching story **Sing You Home** (Atria).



Paperback on sale March 1

THE BEST-SELLING
NOVEL THAT INSPIRED
THE MOVIE!

There are no guarantees in life, as Jacob Jankowski soon learns when his parents are tragically killed, forcing him onto a new path. These changes in plans, however, bring more rewards than he could have imagined. Now a feature film starring Reese Witherspoon and Robert Pattinson, **Water for Elephants** (Algonquin Books) is the riveting tale of how one life began in the most surprising way: at the circus.

Author explores race and identity

The girl who fell from the sky

By Gloria Blakely

IT IS HARD to believe *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky*, a *Los Angeles Times* best-selling novel by Heidi W. Durrow, almost failed to be published. Publisher after publisher passed on the drama swelling around a girl who has lost her family to tragedy.

This girl, Rachel, hurting from the loss and leaning on denial, seeks solid footing in a world full of edges. Her challenges are great.

The blue-eyed, biracial child (her background is similar to Durrow's own African-American and Danish heritage) is taken in by her African-American grandmother, who lives in Portland, Oregon—the author's hometown. Rachel evidences naiveté about racial identity and relationships, and longs for love and her parents and siblings. Other warm and surprisingly quixotic characters complete the tale.

To Durrow, the story is as relatable as it gets. After all, it was inspired by a real child survivor chronicled in a haunting newspaper article. Starting in 1997, Durrow became obsessed with voicing a young character who transcends tragedy and survival.

Yet, more than three dozen rejections met this compelling fiction. The book resists categorizing, much the way Rachel defies conventional labels in the book, and publishers were unable to see how her survival story fit into their readers' world.

"The rejections were crushing," Durrow admits. Her quest nearly ended in a waterfall of tears, until her husband directed her to wait in her favorite chair. He reappeared from the kitchen with champagne, olives, almonds and cheese to help them work through the sadness together.

The next morning, Durrow found pearls

of advice in the stack of rejection letters and began editing the novel with fragile, if not renewed, hope. She explains, "The thing I did not keep out, and the thing I definitely decided to put in the book, was my heart. I put in every ounce of feeling I had about all these issues related to identity, family, continuity and other things."


Ten years into weaving pieces of her emotional self into Rachel's story, Durrow submitted her manuscript to the 2008 Bellwether Prize for Literature of Social Change. Durrow says she will never forget the call she received from Barbara Kingsolver, the prize's founder, saying she'd won. In addition to vindication for a decade of hard work, the prize included a publishing contract. It changed her life.

For Durrow, who currently divides her time between New York City and Los Angeles, her longtime dream of writing novels stood at odds with her fear of reliving poverty. Welfare was no stranger to her family.

She became the first on both sides of her family to attend a four-year college. She majored in journalism at Stanford, gained a master's degree in business administration from Columbia and did not stop until she had earned a Yale law degree. Life in a bustling law firm, however, left too little time for creative writing, so she morphed into a life-skills trainer for NBA and NFL athletes. That seasonal job provided her with more time to write, co-host a broadcast on the mixed-heritage experience via a podcast at her website, www.heididurrow.com, and co-create the annual Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival.

Now, writing full time has opened the door to a new novel set in a traveling circus touring London and Paris during the 1800s. The plot will drop readers into a drama encompassing a biracial Venus of a trapeze artist, renowned artist Edgar Degas, who

immortalized her beauty on canvas, and the contrasting experiences of a young girl touring in the freak show who has long hair sprouting over her entire body. The rest is evolving.

At present, Durrow must absorb the fact that her first novel is out in the world and people relate to *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky* on all levels. "It is such a joy and a delight," she exclaims, "I really could not have imagined what has happened to the book." 

Gloria Blakely is the co-author or author of eight books and numerous journalism pieces, including articles about Philadelphia on Examiner.com.



TIMOTHY JANE GRAHAM

Heidi W. Durrow

Signed book giveaway

COSTCO HAS 50 SIGNED COPIES of Heidi W. Durrow's *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky* to give away. For a chance

to win, send an e-mail with your name and mailing address to giveaway@costco.com, with "Heidi W. Durrow" in the subject line. Or print your name, address and daytime phone number on a postcard or letter and send it to:

Heidi Durrow, *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088.

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Purchase will not improve odds of winning. Sweepstakes is sponsored by Algonquin Books, P.O. Box 2225, Chapel Hill, NC 27515. Open to legal residents of the U.S. (except Puerto Rico) who are age 18 or older at the time of entry. One entry per household. Entries must be received by April 1, 2011. Winners will be randomly selected and notified by mail on or before May 1, 2011. The value of the prize is \$13.95. Void where prohibited. Winners are responsible for all applicable federal, state and local taxes. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Employees of Costco or Algonquin and their families are not eligible.

FRANCE FREEMAN

FROM THE MOMENT I first saw the title, I knew I had to read Heidi W. Durrow's *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky*. It begged so many questions: Who is this girl? How did she come to fall from the sky (of all places)? And what's going to happen to her now?

Durrow had me spellbound

from the start. Her debut novel tells the believable story of Rachel, a girl with brown skin and blue eyes. She's forced to make sense of both what's been left behind and what lies ahead.

Trapped between races—a place not so unlike the no man's land between heaven and

earth—Rachel struggles to understand relationships and figure out where she fits in. I see Rachel as a person who doesn't want to be forced into convenient categories. She just wants to be who she is. Like so many of us, she is just looking for a soft place to land.

For more book picks, see page 61.



Pennie Clark Iannicello, Costco book buyer



Kids' pick!

Melissa McMeekin,
assistant buyer, books

I HAVE ALWAYS been a fan of puzzles. I can remember nights with my mom and a puzzle spread out all over the dining table. Puzzles have come a long way since I was a young child, and Infantino creates some of the highest-quality fun and educational puzzles on the market today. The **My First Puzzles Four-Pack** is designed for ages 1 to 3. It contains puzzle sets to encourage learning shapes, colors, textures and matching. The **Explore and Learn Puzzle Four-Pack** is for ages 3 to 6. These puzzles help teach hand-eye coordination, and encourage early language development and fine motor skills.



Available
late March

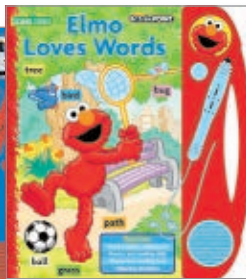
Kids! books & more



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Available early March from Publications
International



AN ENGAGING BOOK AND LEARNING TOOL, ALL IN ONE

Interactive children's books by Active Point may look like regular books at first glance, but open the cover to a world of learning and imaginative play. Each title includes hundreds of activities and games, silly sounds and sing-along songs. Just press the pages with the attached stylus to hear music and stories come to life. Teach phonics and word-building techniques with **Elmo Loves Words**, learn numbers and counting with **1 to 10 with Thomas & Friends** and more.

MADE ESPECIALLY FOR TINY HANDS



Available
early March

SoftPlay's soft cloth, four-book gift sets help develop essential motor skills and early language development. The colorful images and simple text hold baby's attention. Rings attach to a stroller or car seat when on the go. Choose from **Sweet Sesame Books**, **Baby Animals of the World** and **Baby's First Cloth Books**.



Available
mid-March

MOVE TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS

Get a jump on those important formative learning years by establishing fundamental skills to build on for a lifetime. With more than 250 activities in reading, phonics, math and handwriting, as well as hundreds of stickers, early education is a breeze. It's no wonder Rainbow Bridge Publishing is the parents' choice in education!

THE RELUCTANT VIKING HERO RETURNS



Available
mid-March

Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III may be "the dragon whisperer" because of his amazing power over the terrifying beasts, but that wasn't always the case. See how it all started in **How to Train Your Dragon**, and check out Hiccup's newest adventure as he races against the clock to discover America in **How to Ride a Dragon's Storm** (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers).

FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE FABLEHAVEN SERIES

Regular guy Jason Walker wished his life was less predictable until a routine trip to the zoo transported him from the hippo tank to a mysterious new world called Lyrian, where he teams up with a girl named Rachel. As the two search for a way home they become entangled in a quest to save the new world they've discovered—a world without heroes (Simon & Schuster).



On sale
March 15



YOUR FAVORITE
COMFORT
FOOD JUST
GOT HEALTHY!
**Cooking Light
Comfort Food**
(Oxmoor House)
brings you a
collection of
more than 200
classic recipes,
showing you

Available early March

how to transform your favorite comfort food into mouthwatering meals—guilt free. Choose among delectable dishes, including fried chicken, mashed potatoes, buttermilk biscuits, brownies and cookies, coconut pie, crab cakes, sweet potato casserole and more!

Quick Chicken and Dumplings

In this recipe, flour tortillas stand in for the traditional biscuit dough. To quickly thaw frozen mixed vegetables, place them in a colander and rinse with warm water for about a minute.

- 1 tablespoon butter
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 cups chopped roasted skinless, boneless chicken breast
- 1 (10-ounce) box frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
- 1½ cups water
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 (14-ounce) can fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 8 (6-inch) flour tortillas, cut into ½-inch strips
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley



1. Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion; sauté 5 minutes or until tender. Stir in chicken and vegetables; cook 3 minutes or until thoroughly heated, stirring constantly.
2. While chicken mixture cooks, combine water, flour and broth. Gradually stir broth mixture into chicken mixture. Stir in salt, pepper and bay leaf; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer 3 minutes. Stir in tortilla strips, and cook 2 minutes or until tortilla strips soften. Remove from heat; stir in parsley. Discard bay leaf.

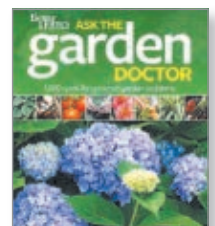
Serve immediately. Yield: 4 servings (serving size: about 1½ cups).

CALORIES 366; FAT 9.3 g (sat 3.1 g, mono 3.9 g, poly 1.4 g); PROTEIN 29.8 g; CARB 40.3 g; FIBER 5.3 g; CHOL 67 mg; IRON 3.4 mg; SODIUM 652 mg; CALC 104 mg

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDES FOR EVERY GARDENING NEED

If you're planning your first garden or looking to add perennials to your current display, this book covers everything.

Ask the Garden Doctor (John Wiley) is packed with easy, everyday solutions for your gardening dilemmas. Pick up this book and others from the experts at *Better Homes and Gardens*.



Available now

March

Book buyers' picks



NONFICTION

***The Best of Top Secret Recipes* and *Top Secret Recipes: Super Secret Restaurant Collection*, by Todd Wilbur.** Wilbur's quest for the best top-secret recipes began in the late 1980s, when it seemed as if just about everyone had a copy of the Mrs. Fields Chocolate Chip Cookie recipe. He tried the recipe and discovered that the results were nothing like a real Mrs. Fields cookie. Twenty years and 10 *Top Secret Recipes* books later, Wilbur is still working on uncovering the clues to cooking the delicious, addictive food we all love and sharing those recipes with the world.

—Melissa McMeekin, assistant buyer, books

***For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History*, by Sarah Rose.** Rose tells the story of how, before 1848, China was the only

country that knew how to grow and make tea. When the East India Trading Company faced losing its monopoly on tea trade with China, the powers that be decided to take matters into their own hands. They sent botanist Robert Fortune deep within China to steal plants to grow on British plantations in India. This well-written history is fun to read, and I'm sure that you, like me, will never look at a cup of tea the same way.

—Joshua Lilly, inventory control specialist, books

***AHS Great Plant Guide, Plants for Places, Great Fruit and Vegetable Guide* and *Gardening Month by Month*, from DK Publishing.** Keeping plants alive and healthy has always been a bit of a mystery to me. But with this set of books I feel that the mystery has been solved. Whether you're a budding gardener or seasoned pro, these books have something to teach you regardless of your growing



goals. No matter where you live or what you want to cultivate, the thousands of photos and step-by-step instructions in these books will bring out your green thumb.

—Jonna Erickson, assistant buyer, books

FICTION

***Earth's Children* series, by Jean Auel.** More than 30 years ago, Auel kicked off her phenomenally successful series with *The Clan of the Cave Bear*. Next month the sixth and final title in the series will be released: *The Land of Painted Caves*. I can't think of a better time to reread this collection of novels about Ayla, the Cro-Magnon female protagonist. It's fascinating to follow Ayla as she's cast off by groups, finds love, deals with misunderstandings and always manages to make those around her see things from a different, more accepting, point of view.

—Shana Rawers, assistant buyer, books

New releases

street dates

March 1

***Minding Frankie*,**

by Maeve Binchy

***Sing You Home*,**

by Jodi Picoult

***Me*, by Ricky Martin**

March 8

***Then Everything Changed*,**

by Jeff Greenfield

***The Money Class*,**

by Suze Orman

March 22

***Night Road*,**

by Kristin Hannah

***Martha Stewart's New Pies and Tarts*,**

by Martha Stewart

March 29

***Hungry Girl 300 Under 300*,**

by Lisa Lillien

***Born to Run*,**

by Christopher McDougall

Finally Releasing From The Disney Vault

~ For A Limited Time Only ~

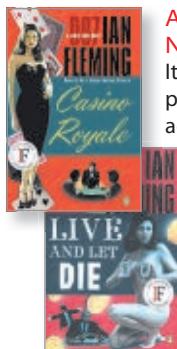
First Time
On Blu-ray™
Combo Pack

Available
March 1

Subject to availability.

Distributed by Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, Burbank, CA 91521. © Disney

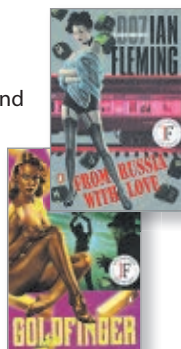
WAREHOUSE ONLY



ADVENTURE THAT'S SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED

It has been nearly 40 years since the premiere of *Dr. No*, the first James Bond adventure to hit the big screen. To celebrate, Penguin is bringing back some of Ian Fleming's best-loved classics, including **From Russia with Love**, **Live and Let Die**, **Casino Royale** and more.

Paperbacks available late March



MY SISTER'S KEEPER

Jules' teenage sister is sent to an elite boarding school. The school has a great reputation, but there are rumors a student's death was actually murder. Could her sister be the next target, in **Without Mercy** (Zebra)?

NOW IN TRADE PAPER FROM FERN MICHAELS

In **To Taste the Wine** (Kensington) a robbery goes awry and grifter Chelsea Myles is left holding a fortune, which buys her passage from London

to Australia. She meets a charismatic vineyard owner, Quaid Tanner, in the rugged Outback, where unexpected love is found.

FROM ONE OF AMERICA'S FAVORITE STORYTELLERS

Former CIA agent Jack Morgan runs Private—a renowned investigation company. Morgan promises maximum force and discretion. But when his former lover is killed, he is forced to choose between justice and revenge in James Patterson's thriller **Private** (Grand Central Publishing).



Paperback available now



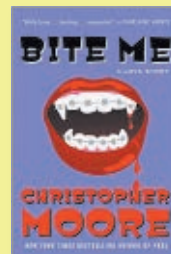
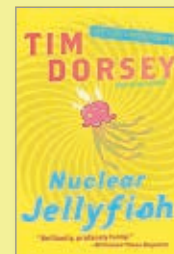
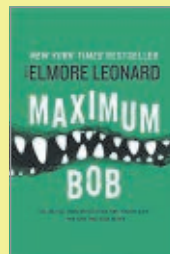
Paperbacks on sale March 29

INTRODUCING A NEW SERIES FROM PRESTON AND CHILD

When Gideon was a child, he watched his father get gunned down. Now he is 24, and his mother's dying wish was to avenge her husband. So, with a new purpose in life, he crafts a spectacular mission of vengeance. But there are those in power who are impressed with Gideon's special skills and have bigger plans for a renegade like him. This is just the beginning (Grand Central Publishing).



Hardcover available now



Paperbacks available March 8

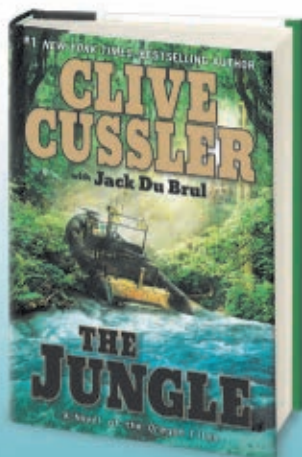
MURDER, MAYHEM AND HUMOR

A band of misfit criminals decides to get revenge on a narrow-minded Palm Beach County judge in Elmore Leonard's latest, **Maximum Bob** (Harper Paperbacks).

Serge A. Storms, Florida's most prolific serial killer, has his sights set on a thug named Jellyfish, but along the way Serge manages to kill off a variety of society's worst lowlives in Tim Dorsey's hilarious **Nuclear Jellyfish** (Harper Paperbacks).

When the city of San Francisco is stalked by a huge vampire cat, Goth girl Friday, Abby Normal, and her bloodsucking friends are on the case in **Bite Me** (Harper Paperbacks)—the love story with no whining.

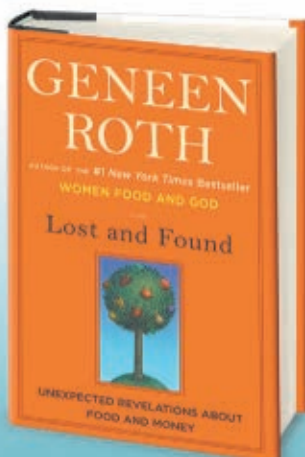
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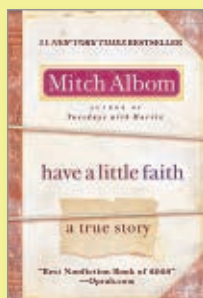
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The author of the breakout bestseller *Women, Food and God* explores how emotional issues with money mirror those with food and dieting.

VISIT GENEENROTH.COM
Hardcover on sale March 22



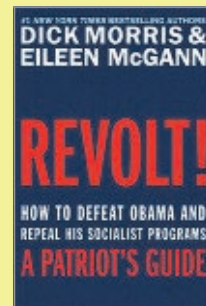
Paperback on sale March 22

THE IMPORTANCE OF BELIEF

In **Have a Little Faith** (Hyperion), Mitch Albom's first work of nonfiction since *Tuesdays with Morrie*, the popular author explores the importance of having something real to believe in during trying times. And it all starts with an unusual request—a rabbi from Albom's hometown asks him to deliver his eulogy.

A PATRIOT'S GUIDE

FOX News commentator and GOP activist Dick Morris proposes comprehensive reform in Washington and offers his practical steps to establish a conservative agenda for 2012 in his latest, **Revolt!** (Broadside Books).



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By Steve Fisher

HOW DID IT HAPPEN—the financial collapse that began in 2008 and cost millions of people their savings, their jobs and their homes? That is the question Charles Ferguson set out to answer in his award-winning documentary, *Inside Job*.

Through interviews with scores of individuals—bankers, government regulators, international financiers, economists and more—Ferguson follows the trail of financial industry deregulation and the lack of government oversight that set the stage for the collapse. While much of the back story to the financial meltdown has already been exposed, what *Inside Job* illustrates is that the players involved in creating the crisis are still very much in charge on Wall Street and in Washington, D.C.

In addition, the film shows how economists at the leading universities are financially rewarded for lending credence to the policies they espouse. Ferguson compares their roles to that of a medical researcher who writes an article recommending a drug while taking money from that drug company. The head of the Harvard Economics Department seems stumped as to whether the examples are related or if ethical standards should be applied to university economists.

Ferguson, who produced, wrote and directed *Inside Job*, holds a Ph.D. in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and claims no political agenda. “The film is factually correct,” he maintains. “I view myself as a documentary filmmaker, and an investigative journalist and a policy analyst.”

Recently, *The Connection* discussed Ferguson's film with him by phone.

The Costco Connection: How much of the story did you know going in?

Charles Ferguson: I knew some of the people who were involved in analyzing this and warning about it in advance. Then I did six months of research before we started filming. But even so, there were still things that came out in the interviews that were a surprise.

CC: Did you find it was worse than you thought it was?

CF: Unfortunately, I did. When I started making the film, if someone had told me we'd find out that ... all of the investment banks



“The film is factually correct. I view myself as a documentary filmmaker, and an investigative journalist and a policy analyst.”

Producer-writer-director
Charles Ferguson

SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

had been secretly creating securities that they hoped would fail and then profiting by betting against them, I wouldn't have believed it. I would have said, “That doesn't happen in the United States. We don't do that.” The other thing I learned that was also very disturbing was how unprepared and disorganized and thoughtless the government's response was to the crisis.

CC: What was the level of criminal involvement?

CF: We don't really know, because unfortunately there has not been adequate investigation of that question. When I say we don't know, I mean we out here in the public don't know. People in the Justice Department might, people in the FBI might, people in the banks probably do.

CC: Why do you think there were no prosecutions?

CF: I think initially, in the early Obama administration, for the first six months of 2009, there was to some extent a fear for the stability of the system. I think that part of it is unquestionably the people running the government were heavily involved in this. Not necessarily directly criminally liable themselves, but they had spent the previous

decade saying that everything these guys were doing was fine and the regulation was fine, and it certainly wouldn't look good for their reputations and their public personas if it turned out that everything and everybody they had been working with and supporting was now going to jail. And then there's very simply the political power of this industry. Bankers don't go to jail anymore.

CC: What do you want the viewer to take from this film?

CF: I certainly hope that people seeing the film will come away with the sense that there was something very wrong done here and that it hasn't been fixed and that our current government is not going to fix it unless we make them. It's going to take a very grassroots effort and come from the bottom up.

Ferguson has set up a way for people to be part of that effort by going to Facebook.com and searching “Inside Job.” A teacher's guide to the film is available online at www.sonyclassics.com/insidejob/. [E]

The Costco Connection

Inside Job is available on DVD at all Costco warehouses.

"Reading a Maeve Binchy novel is like settling in for a cozy visit with an old friend."

—Booklist

Noel is a free-spirited young Irishman with no cares for anyone but himself and his next drink. But when he fathers a child and becomes responsible for raising her, he learns some of life's hardest lessons and is forced to become the adult he never dreamed he could be. Now he's becoming the man he never was in **Minding Frankie** (Knopf), the heartfelt latest novel from Maeve Binchy. With an incredible network of support, including some much-loved characters from Binchy's previous books, Noel may manage to muster the courage he needs to raise a child.



Hardcover on sale March 1

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO CREATE YOUR NEW AMERICAN DREAM?

Suze Orman, the woman millions of Americans have turned to for financial advice, says it's time for a serious reconsideration of the American dream—what promise it still holds, what aspects are in need of revision and how it must be refashioned to fit our lives so that we can once again have faith that our hard work will pay off and that a secure and hopeful future is within our reach. **The Money Class** (Spiegel & Grau) is now in session.

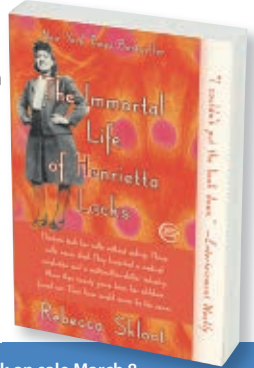


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Henrietta Lacks died in 1951, but she lives on to this very day in the form of cell samples that were taken while she was alive. Those cells have been used the world over and even led to startling medical breakthroughs, but Lacks herself died anonymously. Now, in the best-selling **The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks** (Broadway), a woman who gave the world so much finally gets the recognition she deserves—and her story is as fascinating as the science itself. Now available in paperback.



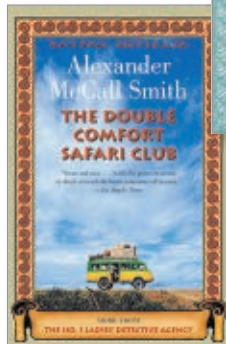
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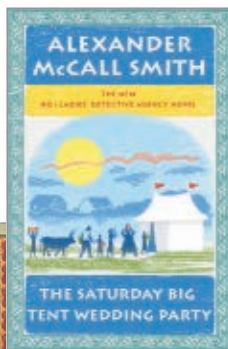
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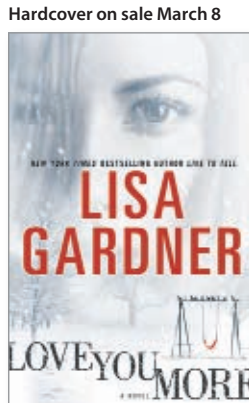
The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency continues to enchant while solving Botswana's greatest mysteries! The 12th installment in Alexander McCall Smith's worldwide best-selling series is **The Saturday Big Tent Wedding Party** (Pantheon). Precious Ramotswe's help is needed to track down a runaway groom while also finding the person responsible for killing cattle on a local ranch. Plus, love is in the air for two of her closest friends! Also, don't miss **The Double Comfort Safari Club** (Anchor), now in paperback. With multiple cases sprouting up, and personal turmoils causing all kinds of problems for Precious and her friends, the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency is busier than ever. But can they crack one of the toughest cases they've ever faced?



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NEW FROM LISA GARDNER, WINNER OF THE 2010 INTERNATIONAL THRILLER AWARD

From the best-selling author of *The Neighbor* comes a thrilling new mystery starring Detective D.D. Warren and state trooper Bobby Dodge. Together, the two must investigate why a female officer would shoot and kill her husband—and why the woman's young daughter is nowhere to be found. The shocking truth behind **Love You More** (Bantam) will leave you breathless!

By Bryan Reesman

HE THOUGHT of even fictionally witnessing the real-life horror experienced by mountain climber Aron Ralston has understandably made many moviegoers squeamish. (Ralston, whose right hand became pinned under a boulder during a hike in Utah, had to take drastic measures to escape from his five-day nightmare.) But the truth is that the acclaimed *127 Hours* is an engrossing film. Using flashbacks, hallucinations and solo video footage, it vividly paints a portrait of a nature-loving loner who learns to better appreciate his life and his family and friends through his terrible ordeal.

A key part of the film's success is the performance of Golden Globe- and Oscar-nominated actor James Franco, who worked under the assured direction of Oscar-winner Danny Boyle (*Slumdog Millionaire*). Franco is the film's anchor, and he summons a fantastic performance that will keep you glued to the screen.

Franco tells *The Costco Connection* that while Ralston was very much involved in the creation of the film, Boyle also made sure that filming the movie was an experience he and Franco went through together.

"The story itself is incredibly dramatic," declares Franco. "But the fact is, if we really told the true story, the guy would be there for five days with long, long passages of time where nothing was going on. So it was the filmmakers' job to take all that material and turn it into something dramatic and exciting and something that built up to a climax and had an arc to it. Once we made the step towards making a movie, we wanted it to be realistic and wanted to honor Aron and the experience that he went through, but there are slightly different kinds of requirements when you are making a feature film than just the facts. It's more about bringing the experience to life."

Replicating that experience meant shooting primarily in one very claustrophobic location. That factor and the intensity of the material admittedly drove Franco a little crazy. "If you can just imagine going back to the same spot every day and performing the most intense kind of material—it's like Sartre's *No Exit*, you know? That was one of the reasons why Danny wanted a short, intense schedule."

Simultaneously utilizing two accomplished directors of photography, Boyle was able to amass three and a half months' worth of material in just two, explains Franco. While the actor was on the set six days a week, he says the director worked all seven. On the extra day, Boyle would shoot scenes with the other actors.

The Costco Connection

127 Hours is available in standard format at all Costco warehouses.

Indeed, those additional scenes, which include family members, recent acquaintances and a truly freaky cameo from an inflatable Scooby-Doo, help flesh out Ralston's personality and traces of his life story that he felt metaphorically led to his predicament. Being able to watch videos that Ralston made while he was trapped certainly helped Franco channel the angst Ralston felt at the time.

"Whenever Aron tells the story now, everybody knows that he got out," notes the actor. "But on the video it's not hindsight. He's in the middle of it and doesn't know that there's a happy ending. It was pure behavior. It was not somebody telling me what it was like, it was seeing somebody right in the middle of it, and the surprising thing was how composed he was. He made them [video messages] over the course of the five days, up until within


James Franco, as Aron Ralston, contemplates his options after becoming pinned under a boulder in *127 Hours*.

Pressurepoint

James Franco's journey behind *127 Hours*

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT

an hour of figuring out how to escape. He was starting to deteriorate physically and emotionally, but he held himself together all the way through, because he was making the messages for his family and his mother. At the end he thought it was the last thing that they would ever see of him. He tried to make them controlled enough that his mother would be able to watch them."

Luckily, Franco and Boyle made a highly watchable film from very dire straits. It may not always be easy to sit still through, but *127 Hours* is a testament to the human spirit and the ability to transform oneself through painful life lessons. 

New York freelancer Bryan Reesman has been published in *The New York Times*, *American Way* and *Inked*.

More in archives
To read *The Connection's* interview with Aron Ralston, go to Costco.com, enter "Connection." At *Online Edition*, search "Ralston."



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Autoimmune diseases

RESEARCHERS HAVE identified more than 80 different autoimmune diseases to date. Some of these are fairly well known, others more obscure, but all are serious to the sufferers. The list includes:

Ankylosing Spondylitis: Inflammatory arthritis of the spine and pelvis.

Antiphospholipid Syndrome: Can cause blood clots and recurrent pregnancy loss.

Autoimmune Hepatitis: Disease of the liver.

Behçet's Disease: Inflammation of blood vessels.

Celiac: Disorder that targets the small intestine.

Hashimoto's Thyroiditis: Progressive thyroid disease.

Ménière Disease: Inflammatory condition deep within the inner ear.

Multiple Sclerosis: Inflammation of the central nervous system.

Myasthenia Gravis: Affects the skeletal muscles.

Primary Biliary Cirrhosis: Inflammatory destruction of the bile ducts of the liver.

Psoriasis: Common, chronic skin disease.

Sarcoidosis: Multisystem autoimmune disease; sometimes misdiagnosed as tuberculosis.

Scleroderma: Affects the skin and connective tissues in the body.

Sjögren's Syndrome: Targets tear, salivary and other moisture-producing glands in the body.

Ulcerative Colitis: Inflammation of the colon (large intestine); characterized by chronic ulceration.

Vasculitis: Inflammation of the blood vessel system, including veins, arteries and capillaries.

To view a complete list of autoimmune diseases and late-breaking research, visit:

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association, www.aarda.org.

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, www.niaid.nih.gov/topics/autoimmune

Department of Health and Human Services, www.hhs.gov

Johns Hopkins Autoimmune Disease Research Center, <http://autoimmune.pathology.jhmi.edu/>

Knowing your family medical history helps with detection of autoimmune disease

All in the family

By Jacqueline M. Duda

DOCTORS THOUGHT it was tendonitis. "My hands were hurting," explains Donna Di Sante, a longtime Michigan volunteer with the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA) and a Costco member. The pain, swelling and redness spread to her feet—and then she couldn't raise her arms. For years these symptoms would come and go.

When Di Sante stumbled across a description of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) in a medical textbook, she thought, "That's what I have!" Di Sante's physician tested and diagnosed her, at age 27, with RA, an autoimmune disease that affects the lining of the joints.

Di Sante is now 61, and RA has decimated her knees, hips and shoulders. She is one of 50 million Americans—75 percent of

them women—who are struggling with autoimmune disease. These diseases represent the fourth-largest cause of disability among women, says AARDA's chairman of the board of directors, Stanley M. Finger. Autoimmune diseases are among the top 10 leading causes of all deaths among U.S. women age 65 and younger.

In autoimmunity, a category of disease, the immune system not only attacks external invaders, such as bacteria and viruses, but also starts attacking healthy cells inside the body. And when regulatory mechanisms that tightly control the immune response are defective, absent or depleted, an autoimmune disease can emerge.

"Autoimmune diseases have two com-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 68



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 67

ponents," says Finger, "a genetic predisposition and a trigger [something that activates the disease]."

Family ties

"I guess I get it [RA] from both sides of my family," says Di Sante. Her maternal and paternal aunts both had RA, and her grandfather had Type 1 diabetes—the autoimmune form of diabetes.

"Autoimmune diseases often run in families," explains Costco member Betty Diamond, M.D., head of the Center for Autoimmune and Musculoskeletal Disease at the Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, North Shore–Long Island Jewish Health System Foundation in Manhasset, New York. They might cluster—one family member could have lupus (a systemic autoimmune disease that affects many parts of the body), another might have RA and still another could have Crohn's (an autoimmune inflammatory bowel disease).

Having one autoimmune disease also increases the risk that a person will develop more, adds Diamond: "Genetics play a role, but they're not the only player."

"Autoimmune diseases are polygenic," meaning it usually takes a combination of several genes to develop an autoimmune disease, explains Noel R. Rose, M.D., professor of pathology, molecular microbiology and immunology at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions and director of the Johns Hopkins Autoimmune Disease Research Center in Baltimore. "The more [genes predisposed to autoimmune disease] you have, the more likely you are to develop an autoimmune disease."

Research is helping scientists to sort them out. Rose says family history is the "poor man's human genome project." "It's the kind of evidence we started with years ago, to see who might have an inherited risk," he explains.

Triggers

What exactly triggers the disease seems to be different for everyone, although there is some relationship between stress or lack of sleep and onset of a disease or flare-ups.

While there's no evidence to suggest that stress causes autoimmune disease, or is a trigger of autoimmune disease, stress can exacerbate flares (symptoms running amuck). "Stress makes the body go into fight-or-flight mode, which revs up your immune system," Finger explains. Not good for an immune system already in overdrive.

An invisible illness

"Because these diseases develop slowly and are so diverse, it's hard to put all the symptoms together," says Rose. The symptoms aren't clear-cut. "And the concept of autoimmune disease is fairly recent," he explains.

"Physicians used to be taught that auto-

immune diseases were rare," says Finger. So, historically, they didn't go looking for one.

"Awareness is the watchword," says Rose. "The most important information in medicine that a physician can get is from the patients. You have to listen very carefully to what they're saying."

Intermittent aches and pains in various parts of the body and unexplained, overwhelming exhaustion might be suspect, says Finger; women struggling with infertility or multiple miscarriages might be affected by autoimmunity. "The first thing a physician should do is take down the family history," Finger explains. "The more family members that have an autoimmune disease, the higher the risk."

A blood test that coincides when symptoms are present is key. Blood work that measures auto-antibodies that develop when an autoimmune disease is present can help pinpoint a diagnosis. "We're making great strides identifying these biomarkers," says Finger.

"The [frustrating] thing about autoimmune disease is, you can't necessarily tell by just looking at someone that they have a disease," says Di Sante. "So it's hard for people to understand the damage these conditions can do." It's like being a member of the walking-wounded coalition. There are no quick fixes or cures. And some autoimmune diseases can lead to costly and life-threatening health complications and lost productivity.

"Everything takes longer to do," Di Sante explains. For someone with RA, a simple task such as buttoning a shirt may be downright impossible. Most autoimmune patients carry a major sleep debt, and some become unable to work. Exercise is difficult, especially during flare-ups. "Support from family and friends helps," adds Di Sante, who always keeps a good sense of humor and loves playing roles as a comedic actress.

"Autoimmune diseases should be thought about not just separately, but together," Rose insists.

"Understanding one autoimmune disease helps you to understand others," Diamond explains.

"There has been progress," says Rose. "I've been in this field for half a century, and this is a most exciting time." New treatment advances are under way for lupus and multiple sclerosis, diseases that hadn't seen progress made in decades. "The research is paying off. But funding hasn't kept pace with the numbers of people affected," Rose adds. "It's taking too many years to get treatment from the test tube to the patient." □

Jacqueline M. Duda, a Washington, D.C.-based health writer, has been diagnosed with several autoimmune diseases. She is working to connect the dots in her own family medical history.

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¹ Independent human clinical study (Los Angeles, 2008).
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March Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

THERE IS A mantra that comes up frequently when the subject is colorectal cancer: "Preventable, treatable, beatable." That's because preventing this form of cancer has been tremendously successful, or, if it is detected early enough, a good outcome is achievable via surgical intervention.

Colorectal cancer, involving the colon or rectum, is second to lung cancer as a leading cause of cancer deaths. It is equally common in men and women. In 2010, more than 142,000 new cases were diagnosed in the U.S., while more than 51,000 people died from the disease.

The key to beating colorectal cancer is periodic screening, beginning before any symptoms appear. Age 50 is the starting point for those at average risk; those at greater risk need to start screening earlier. Diagnostic tests include colonoscopy, flexible sigmoidoscopy and barium enema.

The goal of the testing is to discover or rule out the existence of colorectal polyps, growths that protrude from the lining of the colon or rectum. The majority of these polyps never become cancer, yet all cases of colorectal cancer start from a polyp.

Who is at risk?

- Men and women age 50 and older
- People who use tobacco, are obese or are sedentary
- Those with a family history of colorectal cancer, polyps or other types of bowel disease

What helps to reduce risk?

- Don't smoke.
- Don't drink alcohol excessively.
- Be physically active and exercise regularly.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a high-fiber diet rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans and whole grains.
- Consume calcium-rich foods such as low-fat or skim milk.
- Limit red meat consumption and avoid processed meats.

Where can you get more information?

www.preventcancer.org
www.fightcolorectalcancer.org [C]

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Straight to the point

Why straight teeth are so important

By Dr. Jacqueline Fulop-Goodling

A WELL-ALIGNED smile is not just part of a pretty face—it is the mark of a healthy mouth. And your mouth is the gateway to the rest of your body.

Straight teeth allow teeth to be brushed more efficiently, improve speech and allow for better digestion, leading to overall better health.

The best way to keep gums healthy is through proper brushing and flossing (since bacteria can hide between teeth), but even the best brushes have a hard time getting rid of every "tooth bug" in a crowded mouth.

Well-aligned teeth trap fewer particles, develop fewer areas of decay and are easier to floss, all of which is imperative to good gum and oral health. In contrast, teeth with a lot of spacing should be treated with orthodontics to close those gaps since gums are healthiest when they fit snugly around teeth on both sides.

There are more enzymes in your mouth than in your stomach that break up food, making digestion easier. People who chew longer and eat slower digest their food better and therefore have a tendency to be slimmer! Straight teeth do a better job of breaking up the food particles and allowing this process to occur.

The position of teeth plays a major role in the ability to correctly pronounce certain



BRAND X

sounds; an example of this is when children lose their baby teeth and lack the ability to pronounce certain words. Certain letters can be clearly pronounced only when the tongue hits and makes specific contact with the teeth. When teeth are out of alignment, it's reflected in a person's enunciation, whether the person is 6 years old and waiting for adult teeth to erupt or 40 with misaligned teeth.

Recent studies show gum disease to be a major factor in overall health and wellness. Managing periodontal disease can help to reduce the risk for heart disease as well as diabetes. Additionally, findings published in the February 2010 issue of *Obstetrics and Gynecology* link pregnancy-related gum disease to the loss of a (full-term) unborn baby.

Straightening your or your child's teeth is truly an investment in overall health. [C]

Jacqueline Fulop-Goodling (www.drjackie smiles.com), is a New York-based orthodontist.

Hope for the peanut challenged



IMAGESOURCE

PEANUT ALLERGY IS a common food allergy, and one of the most dangerous. Some people can experience a severe reaction to just a trace amount of peanut ingested by accident in a supposedly peanut-free food.

Parents quickly learn to be vigilant about their children who have exhibited a peanut allergy, constantly carrying an EpiPen to deliver lifesaving epinephrine to stave off anaphylactic shock, a sometimes-fatal extreme reaction to an allergen.

With the incidence of peanut allergies in children doubling over the last 30 years, peanut and other common food allergies are receiving major scrutiny through research efforts supported by the National Institutes of Health and carried out by the Consortium of Food Allergy Research. Originally established in 2005, the consortium recently received funding for

another five years of studies, with several clinical trials under way at major medical centers.

The peanut is well represented in the research so far, and results from work with children at Duke University Medical Center are very promising. Oral immunotherapy, a systematic method of desensitization to peanuts by gradually ingesting larger doses of peanut protein, is seen as a breakthrough. By the fourth month of a daily regimen, a child previously allergic to peanuts should be able to eat a full serving of them without incident. Ongoing exposure to peanuts is necessary to maintain the desensitization, all under medical supervision.

Though the treatment has not yet been approved by the Food and Drug Administration, what Duke and other centers are learning about the peanut and oral immunotherapy will likely influence the management of many other food allergies.

To learn more, visit www.niaid.nih.gov/news.

—David Wight

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Fekkai's flair

Salon styling
products ensure
beautiful hair

By Christianna McCausland

FREDERIC FEKKAI—salon owner, stylist to the stars and businessman behind the Fekkai brand of hairstyling products—loves to pilot his own helicopter. “I love flying,” he tells *The Connection* from his New York office. “From above you can see amazing homes, rivers, estates, farms. It frees my mind.”

The sky seems an appropriate place from which to survey the beauty empire that Fekkai, 52, has built. Raised in France, he got into the world of beauty through a bit of a fluke. His first love was art—he aspired to be a sculptor—but ended up in law school instead. While in school he worked as a model, and a stylist and makeup artist on a photo shoot opened his eyes to the possibilities in the salon industry. The life of a stylist merged his love of art, architecture and design and his affinity for making women look beautiful.

“I believe that beauty is when you don’t try too hard, it’s somehow effortless,” he says. “To me, it’s always been important to help women embrace, understand and maintain their style.”

That philosophy helped rocket him through the ranks of Paris salons. He emphasized customized hairstyling at a time when signature cuts were in vogue. In 1989, Fekkai created a salon for Bergdorf Goodman, launching him into the stratosphere of high-end hair care. Over the years his clients have included stars such as Debra Messing, Jessica Lange and Heidi Klum. When Hillary Clinton became first lady, he famously updated her look for the White House limelight.

Even as Fekkai grew in eminence, he saw a fundamental flaw in the hair-care industry. “I realized that when I was styling my customers and

giving them advice, there was a lack of product to treat as well as style,” he explains. “I wanted a styling product that wouldn’t damage the hair.”

The Fekkai line of hair products, launched in 1995, was created with the same attention usually reserved for prestigious skin care, and was intended to pamper and care for the hair while promoting style and hold. Fekkai describes his products as “invisible”: “When you put your fingers through the hair you feel no roughness.”

The products do not require salon certification to use. “Our claim to fame is we create styles that are easy to reproduce at home,” says Fekkai. “That’s also why I created a customer-friendly product that’s easy to apply.”

While Fekkai keeps abreast of the latest trends through his work in fashion and with celebrities, he still believes that the best hairstyles are those that work with the hair’s natural assets and fit the wearer’s personality. He decries anything abusive to hair, such as excessive bleaching or processing, and has a disdain for disconnected layers.

In 2008, Fekkai’s collection became a part of the Procter & Gamble family of products. He is still very hands-on with product development, but he also enjoys spending time at his country home in upstate New York with his wife, Shirin, and his two children. It’s not surprising that, given his French heritage, he relishes cooking meals with his family and has an appreciation for fine wine.

Currently Fekkai operates seven salons that serve hundreds of clients a day. His goal is to take the Fekkai brand to a new level of global awareness. “I have to pinch myself sometimes to look at what this has become,” he says. “I’m proud that the customer has come to trust the Fekkai brand.”

Cultivating self-confidence and revealing natural beauty remains Fekkai’s passion. “My mantra, and what I really love about this industry and what I do, is that it’s timeless—there’s no end to making people look and feel great.”

Christianna McCausland is an award-winning freelance writer who covers a wide range of business and lifestyle issues.

Frederic Fekkai's tips for healthy, stylish hair

- Alternate shampoos every wash to keep hair pH balanced.
- If you use tools—a blow dryer, a flat iron—first use a protection product, such as a spray or a treatment masque.
- Don’t wash thick, curly hair every day.
- Work with your hair. Emphasize healthy curly or straight hair—don’t try to make it something it is not.
- Keep the cut and style of your hair looking effortless.



MARC HORN

Name: Frederic Fekkai

Employees: 300

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Phone: (212) 988-6400

Website: www.fekkai.com

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—Frederic Fekkai

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A Tahiti state of mind

By Sarah Wyatt

TAHITI: JUST ITS NAME conjures images of exotic serenity and splendor. Composed of 118 diverse islands in French Polynesia, Tahiti is the perfect destination for romance, rejuvenation, family fun and adventure. The stunning white-sand beaches, natural waterfalls, lush rain forests and abundant warm wishes of *manuia*—a Tahitian greeting for “cheers”—are sure to indulge every taste.

The friendly locals and the feeling of cultural authenticity of the island of Bora Bora have drawn a nod from Hollywood with movies, television shows and celebrity honeymoons. From the 1935 classic *The Mutiny on the Bounty*, to the contemporary *Couples Retreat*, moviegoers are noticing what makes this island so extraordinary. The island was recently the backdrop for the finale of the ABC reality romance show, *The Bachelorette*. There is a hefty ongoing list of celebrities—including country diva Carrie Underwood—who have visited Bora Bora for either a honeymoon or a romantic escape. For those who are interested in experiencing their own couples’ retreat, the InterContinental Bora Bora Le Moana Resort is located at famous Matira Point, which is often regarded as one of the most beautiful sites in French Polynesia.

On the main island of Tahiti, Papeete has become a gateway for modern travelers to French Polynesia. The city’s public market, Le Marché, nightclubs and lively mix of French and Asian restaurants—plus the evening *roulotte* dining trucks that provide a festive, casual way to dine—offer visitors urban excitement before they retire to the island’s remarkable coasts. Some resorts feature spectacular views of Tahiti’s sister island, Moorea.

Dubbed “The Magical Island” and also the inspiration of many works by French painter Paul Gauguin, Moorea is a true romantic paradise with unspoiled beauty. The island offers couples the best of all the Tahitian islands, with



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAHITI TOURISM

Local entertainment and resorts such as InterContinental Bora Bora Le Moana Resort (top) indulge the Tahiti traveler.

turquoise lagoons, select resorts featuring bungalows and acclaimed spas. Nightly sail excursions to view Moorea’s sunset glows are a favorite among honeymoon and other romance travelers.

Tahiti is a smaller destination compared to its cousins to the north, receiving as many passengers in a year that Hawaii gets in about 12 days. Adventure sports are popular draws for families with children, with many of the resorts offering kayaks for guests to use. Several excursion companies offer kite surfing, 4x4 plantation tours, ray feeding, snorkeling, stand-up paddleboarding, surfing and hiking. Families with children have an extra incentive: Air Tahiti Nui frequently offers a Kids Fly Free program.

Ecotourism has presented one of the biggest changes in French Polynesia over the past decade. The InterContinental Bora Bora Resort & Thalasso Spa boasts eco-friendly technologies, including an air-conditioning system powered by sea water. Many resorts throughout Tahiti are Green Globe certified, offering travelers options to enjoy the islands while leaving behind a very small carbon footprint.

Indeed, it’s possible to wish *manuia* to the planet and yourself. ☑

Sarah Wyatt is a freelance travel and outdoor writer for many national publications.



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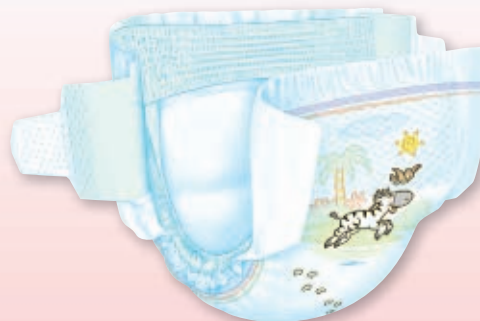
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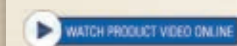
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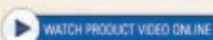
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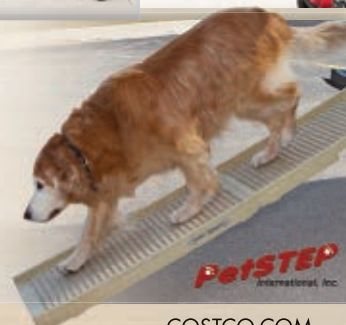
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While supplies last.
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Lifetime® Earth Tone 10' Swing Set
A-frame swing set with 2 belt swings and trapeze bar.

\$449.99 Delivered
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Lifetime® Camping Tent Trailer
Tent and utility trailer combination can be configured multiple ways to create a utility trailer, a loading platform for recreational toys or a fold-out 95 sq. ft. tent.

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#533715 Costco.com only.




Evolution Spas™ CSXi80 80-Jet, 6-Person Spa

Available in faux millstone slate or faux mahogany wood cabinet. 2 pumps, DURA-LAST™ maintenance-free cabinet system and HEATSHIELD™ insulation system.

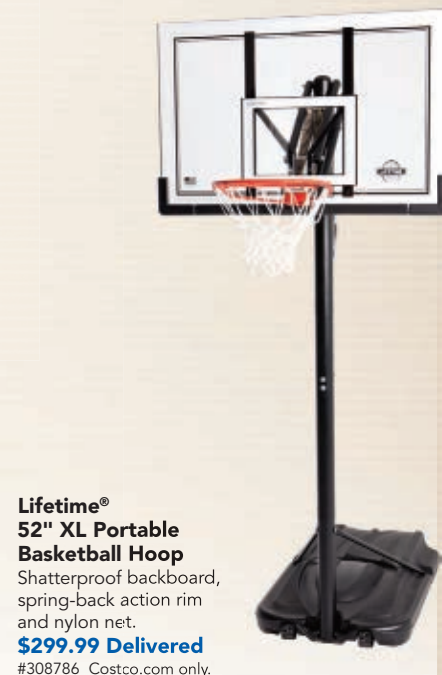
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Fontaine Cambridge Widespread Bathroom Faucet

Oil-rubbed bronze finish.

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Fontaine Residential Spring Kitchen Faucet

Stainless
steel finish.

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Ancona Advanta Pro II 30" LCD Under-Cabinet Range Hood

Rear and top venting, 450 CFM motor.

\$299.99 Delivered After \$50 OFF

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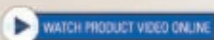
Zuvo Water Filtration System with Moorea Beverage Faucet

Includes brushed-
nickel-finish faucet.

\$139.99 Delivered

Valid 3/1/11-4/3/11

#558372 Costco.com only.



Brady 6-Piece Queen Bedroom Collection

Includes bed, 2 nightstands, dresser, mirror and chest.

\$1,999.99 Delivered After \$450 OFF

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#11536148 Costco.com only.

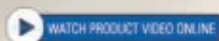
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Pierce 5-Piece Queen Bedroom Collection

Includes bed, 2 nightstands, dresser and mirror.

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Price varies by size and configuration.



Gentry 5-Piece Queen Bedroom Collection

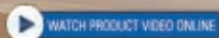
Includes bed, 2 nightstands, dresser and mirror.

\$2,699.99 Delivered

Valid 3/1/11-3/31/11 #11286307 Costco.com only.

Other sizes and configurations available.

Price varies by size and configuration.



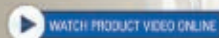
Greensboro 6-Piece King Bedroom Collection

Includes bed, 2 nightstands, dresser, mirror and chest.

\$2,999.99 Delivered

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Sleep Science Ultimate Comfort Queen 14" Memory Foam Mattress

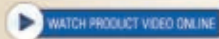
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#11616662 Costco.com only.

Also available in king or Cal-king,
with or without foundation.

Price varies by size and configuration.



Gentry 10-Piece Dining Collection

Includes table, 6 side chairs,
2 arm chairs and server.

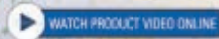
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Kids' Large Cushioned Play Mat

Waterproof. Made of phthalate-free material.
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Set includes flat sheet, fitted sheet and 4 pillowcases. Assorted colors.

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Palermo 4-Piece

Top Grain Leather Collection

Includes sofa, loveseat, chair and ottoman.

\$2,899.99 Delivered

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#11509734 Costco.com only.
Other configurations available.



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Montecito 3-Piece Top Grain Leather Collection

Includes sofa, chair and ottoman.

\$1,499.99 Delivered

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#564372
Costco.com only.



Madison 4-Piece

Top Grain Leather Collection

Includes sofa, loveseat,
chair and ottoman.

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Burgo Bonded Leather Club Chair 2-Pack

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Round Brilliant Diamond Necklace (1.00 ctw)

18kt white gold.

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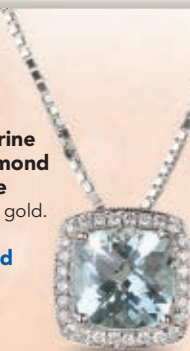


Aquamarine and Diamond Necklace

14kt white gold.

\$649.99 Delivered

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Aquamarine and Diamond Earrings

14kt white gold.

\$199.99 Delivered

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Round Diamond Hoop Earrings (3.05 ctw)

14kt white gold.

\$2,599.99 Delivered

#560060



Three-Stone Round Brilliant Diamond Ring (1.00 ctw)

14kt white gold. Available in sizes 5, 6 or 7.

\$1,999.99 Delivered

#11619255



Round Brilliant Diamond Ring (.50 ctw)

Platinum. Available in sizes 5, 6 or 7.

\$999.99 Delivered

#11538998



Aquamarine and Diamond Ring

14kt white gold.

\$899.99 Delivered

#537612



Aquamarine and Diamond Necklace

14kt white gold.

\$169.99 Delivered

#397443

All diamonds are minimum VS2 clarity, I color. All items Costco.com only.

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USP has tested and verified select Kirkland Signature™ supplements for their ingredients, potency and manufacturing process. USP sets official standards for dietary supplements. See www.usp-dsvp.org.

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

¹Note: Coenzyme Q10 is not intended to serve as a replacement for statin therapy, nor should you discontinue taking any prescribed medications while supplementing with Coenzyme Q10.

- Supports heart health*
- Promotes antioxidant health*
- Studies indicate that CoQ10 levels may decline as we age*
- Cholesterol-lowering prescription medicines can deplete CoQ10 levels in the body¹

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Kirkland Signature bath products have you covered

Bathing beauty



BuyingSmart

Consumer reporter **Pat Volchok** gives a behind-the-scenes look at Costco products and services. Send your questions about this article to: buysmart@costco.com.

SHOPPING FOR HEALTH and beauty products at stores where aisles are crammed with overwhelming choices, unpronounceable ingredients and questionable claims could bring on an additional stop at the anticancer counter.

But it's important to know what you are putting on and in your body. Fortunately, Costco health and beauty buyer experts have created a narrowed-down selection of safe, first-rate Kirkland Signature™ products just for members.

In a lather

Health and beauty buyer Carolyn Sakai says, "Every Kirkland Signature item must be worthy of the Costco name. When it comes to bath and beauty products, we are up front. We list all ingredients by order of weight, including those that are less than 1 percent."

Carolyn and assistant buyer Scott McCarron show me their products: Kirkland Signature body bar soap, body wash, moisture shampoo and moisture conditioner (all available in Costco warehouses only).

Bar exam

We start with a product I consider simple: a bar of soap. But I'm quickly reminded nothing

is simple when it comes to Kirkland Signature.

Most bar soaps are made primarily from byproducts of the meatpacking industry or from synthetic detergents. They can be produced out of the country and usually contain sodium tallowate (rendered beef fat and lye) and/or synthetics such as the potentially skin-irritating chemicals BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene) and DEA (diethanolamine), a sudsing agent.

The Kirkland Signature body bar is made in Tennessee and is similar to some of the finest-quality bar soaps. Plant based, with no tallow or synthetic detergents, it also includes skin-softening glycerin and other moisturizers. Neither BHT nor DEA is allowed.

I shop around. Costco sells 15 4.5-ounce bars for \$8.99, or 60 cents per bar. A similar bar made with synthetic detergent and tallow is 93 cents for a smaller, 4.25-ounce bar.

Body wash

The Kirkland Signature body wash has a similar story. Made in Toronto, Ontario, it contains 100 percent pure exotic plant extracts, including acai, goji berry, chamomile, mangosteen, basil, pomegranate and olive. These extracts help to nourish skin and combat free radicals, and are packed with

More in archives

On Costco.com, enter "Connection." At Online Edition, search "buysmart."



ALL PHOTOS: RUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

superb anti-aging properties, yet are gentle enough for babies.

Scott reports, “Men are finally catching on to the body wash craze and are big fans of this product, especially since they can use it as a shower shaving gel too.” (So can women.)

Carolyn adds, “We heard from our members that they loved the body wash, but found the bottle difficult to handle. We’ve incorporated a new cap and a non-slip label that makes it easy to hold and squeeze.”

I like the creamy feel and skin-softening effect of this body wash made with no chemical ingredients. The price is also a pleasure: 54 fluid ounces (two bottles of 27 ounces each, for easier handling) at \$9.99.

Hair care

The more the buyers and I talk, the more I hear about worrisome chemicals added to many other health and beauty products. For example, about 90 percent of all shampoos and conditioners include sulfates, a potential skin irritant; thankfully this is not the case with Kirkland Signature hair-care products.

Kirkland Signature shampoo and conditioner are 100 percent vegan, formulated with nourishing organic aloe, sunflower and avocado extracts, and no chemicals.

Manufactured in Carson, California, both are safe for color-treated hair (the conditioner has added UV protectants to filter out the sun’s damaging rays) and can be used by people of all ages, including babies—although the shampoo is not tear free.

Noticing that the Kirkland Signature moisture shampoo and conditioner sound a lot like the plant-based brands sold in salons, I pry.

Carolyn tells me, “Costco shampoo and conditioner emulate the leading plant-derived brands for healthy ingredients that clean, hydrate and nourish hair. You will notice the difference after just one use. Your hair will feel softer and healthier and look shinier.”

I do find one disparity: Savings on the Kirkland Signature products average around 30 percent compared to the price of similar national brands.

Hubby tested the Costco shampoo and found it was thick, creating luxurious, very dense, big-bubble lather. He reports, “A little goes a long way.” I tried the shampoo and the conditioner, and wondered why I haven’t used them sooner.

All four products—shampoo, conditioner, body wash and bar soap—are biodegradable and formulated free of synthetic paraben preservatives, cheap foaming agents such as sulfates, and gluten. None are tested on animals.

All smiles

Made in the U.S. by one of the world’s largest toothpaste companies, new Kirkland

Signature ProComplete plus Whitening fluoride toothpaste (in fresh mint flavor) is similar in formula to premium toothpastes with whitening.

Costco buyer Greg Shavey developed the new toothpaste, which is available only in Costco warehouses.

I sit down with Greg and quickly learn that many toothpastes are marketed with “exaggerations” of their extra anti-cavity fighting powers.

Greg says, “No matter what some brands claim, the maximum cavity-fighting fluoridation allowed by the Food and Drug Administration is 0.15 percent w/v [weight by volume in ratio to the other ingredients]. The Kirkland Signature toothpaste is at that 0.15 percent maximum.”

I do a little sleuthing on my own and peel away the label rhetoric on two top brands. I find one has only 0.14 percent w/v fluoride and the other lists a misleading 0.243 percent sodium fluoride on the box, which is in fact the same as 0.15 percent w/v fluoride.

Greg adds, “Of course, Costco toothpaste shines above them all in value. At Costco locations, we compared Kirkland Signature ProComplete against Crest Whitening + Scope and Aquafresh Extreme Clean and, at 22 cents per ounce [\$9.99 for 45 ounces], Kirkland Signature shows as much as 10-cents-per-ounce savings over those national brands.”

I tell you, nothing feels quite as good as being cleaned head to toe by Kirkland Signature. 🦷

Putting your money where your mouth is

Comparing toothpaste prices at Costco is easy. This is how Kirkland Signature ProComplete plus Whitening fluoride toothpaste stacked up against the two leading brands carried at Costco.

	Crest Whitening + Scope	Aquafresh Extreme Clean	Kirkland Signature ProComplete
Size	40 ounces	35 ounces	45 ounces
Price	\$12.99	\$9.99	\$9.99
Cost per ounce	32¢	29¢	22¢

special events

Dates and events are subject to change. Special Events for other regions may be found on Costco.com; type "special events" into the search box.

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Click [here](#) for a list of special events by region.

ALASKA

Anchorage

Mar 26 Healthy Heart Clinic

Juneau

Mar 5 Healthy Heart Clinic

IDAHO

Boise

Mar 4-13 Modesty apparel

Mar 12 Healthy Heart Clinic

Coeur d'Alene

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Mar 8-17 Modesty apparel

Nampa

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

MONTANA

Billings

Mar 3-13 Specialty foam and latex mattresses

Bozeman

Mar 18-27 Modesty apparel

Mar 18-27 Specialty foam and latex mattresses

Helena

Mar 12 Healthy Heart Clinic

Kalispell

Mar 29-Apr 8 Modesty apparel

Missoula

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

OREGON

Albany

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Mar 11-20 Modesty apparel

Mar 28-Apr 10 Women's fashion apparel

Aloha

Mar 5 Healthy Heart Clinic

Bend

Mar 19 Healthy Heart Clinic

Clackamas

Mar 12 Healthy Heart Clinic

Eugene

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Mar 26 Healthy Heart Clinic

Hillsboro

Mar 18-27 Pondless outdoor fountains

Mar 19 Healthy Heart Clinic

Medford

Mar 4-13 Modesty apparel

Portland

Mar 7-20 Women's fashion apparel

Roseburg

Mar 11-20 Modesty apparel

Mar 12 Healthy Heart Clinic

Salem

Mar 4-13 Safes

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

Mar 12 Healthy Heart Clinic

Mar 18-27 Modesty apparel

Tigard

Mar 11-20 Modesty apparel

Warrenton

Mar 26 Healthy Heart Clinic

Wilsonville

Mar 5 Healthy Heart Clinic

Mar 11-20 Made in Heaven apparel

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

UTAH

Murray

Mar 18-27 Specialty foam and latex mattresses

Mar 26 Healthy Heart Clinic

Mar 26 Healthy Heart Clinic

Ogden

Mar 18-27 Modesty apparel

Mar 19 Healthy Heart Clinic

Orem

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

Salt Lake City

Mar 12 Healthy Heart Clinic

Mar 18-27 Modesty apparel

Sandy

Mar 18-27 Traeger pellet grills

West Valley

Mar 4-13 Specialty foam and latex mattresses

Mar 5 Healthy Heart Clinic

WASHINGTON

Aurora Village

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Burlington

Mar 4-13 Modesty apparel

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Mar 26 Healthy Heart Clinic

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Lacey

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Marysville

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Mar 11-20 Modesty apparel

Mar 11-20 Traeger pellet grills

Mar 19 Healthy Heart Clinic

Puyallup

Mar 4-20 Collegiate wear

Mar 29-Apr 8 Modesty apparel

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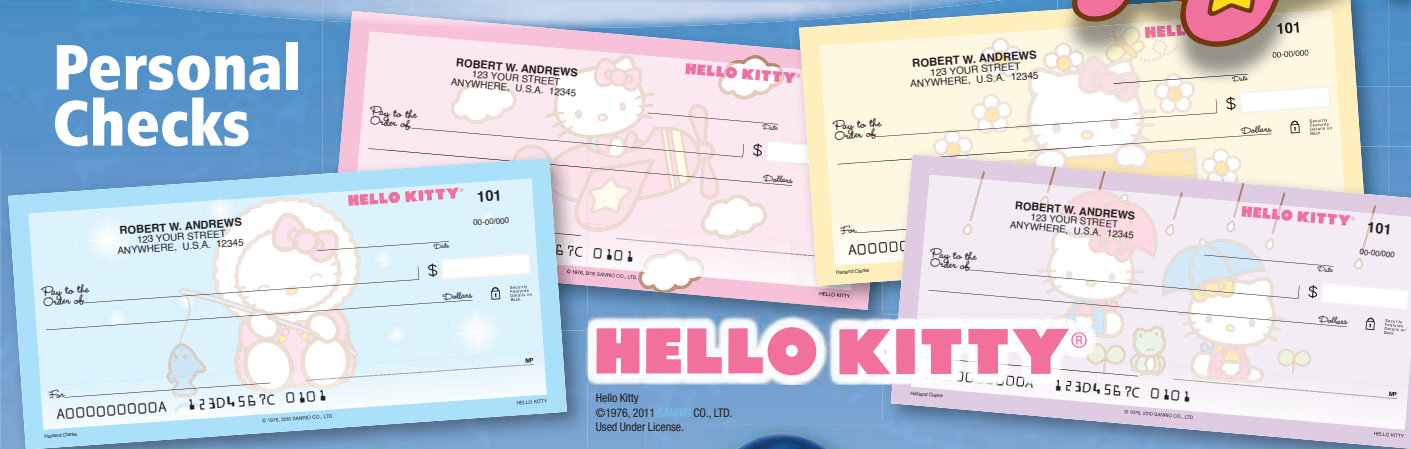
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What's new at Costco

A. Nintendo DS Pokémon Black and White Versions Each version features new Pokémon that players can catch, train and battle as they progress through the game. Both versions let players start with one of three brand-new Pokémon characters. Item #563048 (white), #563043 (black). **Warehouse and Costco.com.**

B. Camp Chef Propane Fire Pit Portable and easy to light, this propane fire pit includes four roasting sticks and a carry bag. Offers 60,000 BTU of comfortable campfire heat. Perfect for camping, patios, pool-side, decks, parks and beaches. Item #551499. **Warehouse only.**

C. Nikon CoolPix L110 Digital Camera Features a 15x zoom, Nikkor lens with 28 mm wide to 420 mm super-tele-photo coverage and macro shooting capability. Record up to seven hours of 720p HD movies with stereo sound with the press of a button. Item #561790. **Warehouse and Costco.com.**

D. Northrock XC6 Mountain Bike Tackle any mountain trail with this bike featuring Shimano components, a stiff yet light aluminum frame and front and rear disc brakes. Item #534568. **Warehouse only.**



T. Foster,
Home Office

E. Bell Sports Crux Bike Helmet The Crux is a sleek, sporty helmet built for comfort. Features 21 cooling vents and a wide range of size adjustments at the turn of a dial. Item #550915. **Warehouse only.**



Orlando vacations

COSTCO TRAVEL BRINGS a little magic to Costco members' lives with brand-new vacation packages, which include admission to the Walt Disney World® Resort Theme Parks, as well as admission to Universal Orlando Resort®, which features The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™.

Depending on the time of travel, these packages can offer savings of up to 30 percent, according to Costco Travel buyer Sarah Gaudet. "They include all the necessary elements: superb values on a rental car, moderate to luxury accommodations and admission to these world-famous theme parks, and offer the convenience of booking all the components together, rather than separately as is required by some other travel suppliers."

For more information, visit Costco.com and click on "Travel" or call toll-free 1-877-849-2730.



H



I



J



K

F. Xterra Convertible Bike Trailer This lightweight alloy-frame bike trailer converts easily into an exercise jogger and accommodates a single child or two children up to a total of 88 pounds. A pneumatic suspension system provides a cushioned ride on uneven surfaces. Item #554344. **Warehouse only.**

G. Collapsible Wagon Great for gardening, camping, sporting events or Costco shopping trips, this collapsible wagon folds conveniently and compactly for easy storage. Transports a maximum weight of 100 pounds. Dimensions: 36.6" L x 20" W x 22.4" H. Item #536212. **Warehouse only.**

H. Olay ProX Advanced Cleansing System This professionally designed, two-speed system delivers daily deep cleansing and gentle exfoliation six times better than basic cleansing and makeup removal. Water resistant for use in the shower. Item #559603. **Warehouse only.**

I. Sleep Innovations Bath Mat The mat includes premium memory foam for the ultimate cushioning experience, plus slip-resistant backing and anti-mold and -mildew protection. Machine washable. Size: 36" L x 24" W x 7/8" thick. Item #560232. **Warehouse only.**

J. Lexmark Genesis All-in-One Wireless Printer Features innovative Flash Scan technology that boasts a 10-megapixel imaging sensor, which allows an instant preview of scanned documents on the 4.3" color touch screen and enables the printer to convert a document to digital format in three seconds. Item #565224. **Costco.com only.**

K. HP Pavilion Desktop PC with 2 x 23" LED Monitors This powerful desktop PC comes with two monitors so you can immerse yourself in gaming, view video and browse the Web side by side and easily perform multiple tasks. Quickly drag content from one screen to another. Item #559329. **Warehouse only.**

L. Carter's Hooded Towels These 100% terrycloth towels are soft, absorbent and fun. The large 27" x 50" towels are perfect for the beach or the pool. Choose from a lion, shark, monster, strawberry, ladybug and flower. Item #539294. **Warehouse only.**



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Movin' & shakin'

WHEN ATTENDING a professional basketball or football game, you'll often find a team of young, fit women doing dance routines to take up any slack in the action. But now a new phenomenon is growing, with teams of senior women sharing the floor. One such team is the Dream Supremes, a group of women ages 55 to 71, who perform at home games of the Atlanta Dream WNBA team.

Costco member Marcia Jaffe founded the group. "It's kind of a trend," she says, citing similar teams in Los Angeles, Miami, New York and Phoenix. "People are interested in what old people look like—women who can still move and look OK."

Jaffe points out that they're not trying to compete with the younger dance squads. The Dream Supremes' goal is to

show "you don't have to be necessarily svelte to be fit," she explains. "They're not all young chickadees. There's 12 [team members] and the coach. The coach is not a senior. She's 53.

"The energy comes out and you do it; it's only a minute and a half," she explains. "Our biggest problem is not physical but in remembering the moves."—Steve Fisher

We want to hear from you!

IF YOU HAVE a note, photo or story to share about Costco or Costco members, e-mail it to connection@costco.com with "The Member Connection" in the subject line or send it to "The Member Connection," The Costco Connection, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

Ashes to jewelry



COSTCO MEMBER Linda Markellis had been making fused-glass pieces for several years when a veterinarian asked if she could make a piece of jewelry that incorporated ashes from the vet's recently deceased dog. After several attempts, Markellis' efforts yielded a bracelet that the woman wore on her wedding day.

Through word of mouth, Markellis, who lives in Whitefish, Montana, began to receive more orders, and within a year she had a request to use human ashes. Finding that there are no laws against it, she accepted the assignment and Over the Rainbow Memorials (www.otrmemorials.com) was born.

Markellis, along with her daughter, Krista, makes pendants, sun catchers and more to help people remember their loved ones. Prices start at \$100 and are based on the size and type of object commissioned. She needs only a teaspoon of ashes, which are visible in the pieces.

Markellis explains that for each commissioned item she asks for photos of and stories about the loved one. "We hold the stories of the people in our hearts as we work," she says. "The innate personality comes out as we work."

She admits that her service isn't for everyone, but adds, "It gives people something to hold onto during the grieving process."

—Stephanie E. Ponder

Family ties

DISHEARTENED AT THE extent of her young son's medical disabilities, Costco member Dana DeRuvo Davis set out to provide Nicholas, now 16, with the best care possible.

"Being a pediatric nurse for Montefiore Home Healthcare [Bronx, New York], I was used to empowering mothers who had limited educational, financial and cultural means to be the best advocate for their children as possible," says DeRuvo Davis. "That's when I found the person to help to heal my family back together. Her name is Louise, an African-American woman, who came to my Italian-American family and showed us all how different cultures can unite to heal."

Davis has just published a book, *The Ties That Bind* (Tate Publishing, www.tatepublishing.com), about two people with little in common coming together to care for a child with special needs. "The book honors Louise," she says, "and shows that it really does take a village to help raise all of our children."—T. Foster Jones



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